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The Soloist's Path to Optimal Musical Communication

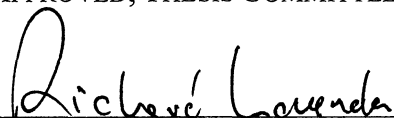
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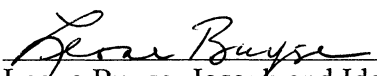
Catherine Ramirez

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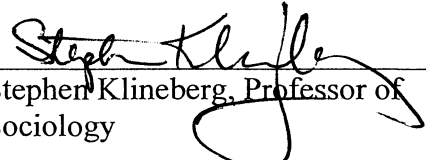
Doctor of Musical Arts

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HOUSTON, TEXAS
DECEMBER 2011

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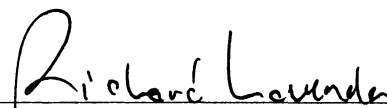
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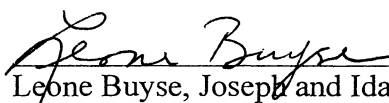
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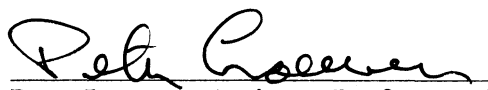
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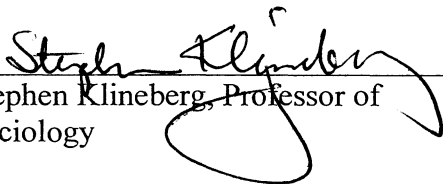
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ABSTRACT

The Soloist's Path to Optimal Musical Communication

by

Catherine Ramirez

This study focuses on the soloist's path to direct musical communication.

Through a subjective questionnaire, thirty-eight flute soloists describe their experiences performing concertos (flute with orchestra) in the traditional concert hall setting. With an emphasis on clarifying the most meaningful musical moments in performance, and identifying the important strategies and procedures these artists use to optimize performances, this study additionally includes a brief discussion about collaboration (involving a specific performer/composer relationship), and a sample of a performer's self-observations while performing a movement of the Christopher Rouse *Flute Concerto*. This primary source study endeavors to supply useful information for the aspiring soloist and the advanced or professional level flutist, as well as preliminary data about artists' experiences of optimal performance and communication with an audience for the purpose of potentially contributing to future interdisciplinary research associated with music.

Compared to research on listening, relatively few scientific studies examine the performance of music from the performer's perspective. By giving world-class performing musicians a voice – using their actual words to describe what they think and how they feel, especially during optimal performances – this author hopes that future neuroscientific and psychological researchers might, through new interdisciplinary experiments involving music performance, learn more about how music and the brain

work. The growing potential in this type of interdisciplinary research may provide greater insight into the most profound benefits of music and its significant power and importance in all human cultures.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank God for the opportunity to be affiliated with Rice University (a dream come true), for the privilege of exploring the topic of optimal performance through this project, for the miracle of technology, and for circumstances permitting a timely completion of this document. I thank my Document Committee – Dr. Richard Lavenda, Leone Buyse, Dr. Peter Loewen and Dr. Stephen Klineberg – for their willingness to participate in this capacity. Dr. Lavenda – thank you for your helpful suggestions to improve the research and the paper, and for challenging my mind and my writing every step of the way. I am grateful to have had this opportunity to work more intensely with you. Ms. Buyse – one of the most inspiring people I have ever met – thank you from the bottom of my heart for your example, your teaching, your playing, your friendship. I look forward to calling you “Leone” after earning my DMA degree! I would also like to thank my faculty colleagues, the staff, and my flute and theory students at St. Olaf College for their encouragement and patience during this year of living a dual life as a full-time student and professor.

I am deeply grateful to all the amazing, inspiring flutists who were eager to participate in this study (mentioned by name on p. 11) – especially amidst busy schedules of their own. Their sincerity and openness in sharing their experiences was incredible – regardless of the fact that they sometimes communicated via speaker phone while driving through New York City toll booths, or with eight hours of time difference and an ocean between us, or in person at an ice cream shop or grocery store, or via email while preparing for a concert or an international flight. Whether they responded very quickly and enthusiastically, or thoughtfully took their time, each one of these flutists generously

provided valuable information that I hope will serve to improve performances, pedagogy and interdisciplinary research for years to come. Thank you so very much!

Special thanks also go to Dr. Melissa Colgin-Abeln – my very first flute teacher and my very first proofreader for this doctoral document – thank you for being such an advocate for me. Lissy – you are like family and you have influenced and inspired me more than you know. Thanks to my brother, Antonio F. Ramirez, Ph.D., who offered cool-headed and much-needed dissertation advice during difficult portions of the process, and to my sister-in-law Roxana Y. Samaniego, Ph.D., for additional proofreading and valuable recommendations. Thanks to my sister, Jennifer Ramirez, for lending me a room, a desk, an Internet connection, a printer, and her canine friends Lono and India (for de-stressing, puppy play-time) during a major part of the writing. Thanks to my parents, Graciela P. and David A. Ramirez, for great Mexican food, movie breaks, and decades of encouragement and support in the pursuit of my musical dreams.

I am grateful to many friends – particularly to Andrea and Corwin Slack, for generously opening their home to me during this past year of commuting from Minnesota to Houston to complete final doctoral work – and to Pearl Muller, for agreeing to request from me periodic progress reports about the paper. I also extend deep thanks to many students who have shared their “light” with me through their music, their example, their curiosity, their courage, and their audacity to believe that dreams can come true. You’ve done it. Here’s more proof.

With thanks and blessings to you all!

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

As research on the brain has increased exponentially over the past several years, the brains of musicians have become of great interest to neuroscientists. In a variety of studies, they have tried to find ways that the complex processes involved in listening to music can provide insights into the way the brain functions. Among other areas, important research has revealed some of the benefits of music for those with brain traumas or diseases, and is beginning to show how music can help brain function thrive throughout the aging process. Daniel J. Levitin, a prominent neuroscientist states, “The last 20 years have seen an increased interest in understanding the function(s)...of music processing, [reflecting] the important role that music can play in informing broad theories of higher order cognitive processes.”¹

The creation of music, too, has been recognized by the scientific community as “a stunning topic to explore, because of the multiplicity of sensory channels involved...and the monitoring of motor output [through both external and internal feedback].”² Scientists can gather much useful and comprehensive information about the brain through studies of music creation. Despite the complexity inherent in examining brain function, studies investigating the creative process (such as writing and composing) have recently begun to emerge. Another neuroscientist – exploring the boundaries between intense

¹ Daniel J. Levitin and Anna K. Tirovolas, *Current Advances in the Cognitive Neuroscience of Music*, (Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences: 2009), vol. 1156, p. 211. Abstract online at <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1749-6632.2009.04417.x/full>

² Diego Minciacchi, “Music Performance,” in *The Neurosciences and Music II: From Perception to Performance*, of the *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences* (Volume 1060), ed. by Giuliano Avanzini et al., (New York: The New York Academy of Sciences, 2005), p. 346. (This volume is the result of a conference entitled The Neurosciences and Music II: from perception to performance, held on May 5-8, 2005 in Leipzig, Germany.)

focus, transcendent states of consciousness and extraordinary creativity (the latter characterized by mental activities that are qualitatively and quantitatively different from ordinary thought processes) – has found “modest evidence” to support that “when the brain/mind thinks in a free and unencumbered fashion, it uses its most human and complex parts.”³ These “human and complex” regions of the brain – at work during a creative activity, such as composing music – are the same regions involved in

episodic memory...used to generate coherent speech, draw on personal memories, and create the experience of consciousness, individual identity, and the capacity for introspection...as well as tap memory through free association.... [These brain regions] are the last to mature in human beings.⁴

Such important and revolutionary findings mark a cutting-edge of research that not only carries significance for future advances in brain science and medicine, but also supports the value of interdisciplinary studies involving music and musicians.

Nevertheless, “most current neuroscientific studies of music and emotion look for simple and direct links between music (e.g. pleasant vs. unpleasant music) and brain response, without taking into account the underlying psychological process that explains this relationship...the sorts of subtle emotions that are found in music listening and creation.”⁵ A central component to these studies involves listening to music. Experiments also usually use limited parameters, due to the complexity of the brain. Some research examines special brain functions, such as synesthesia (associating particular sounds with certain colors), or tone-deafness (inability to vocally match a pitch

³ Nancy C. Andreasen, *The Creative Brain: The Science of Genius* (New York: Plume, 2005), pp. 37 and 73.

⁴ Ibid, p. 71.

⁵ *Handbook of Music and Emotion: Theory, Research, Applications*, ed. by Patrik N. Juslin and John A. Sloboda, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010) [Chapter 33 The Past, Present, and Future of Music and Emotion Research by Patrik N. Juslin and John A. Sloboda], pp. 943-944.

being played). Most studies, however, examine brain reactions to short excerpts of sounds, or limit experiments to specific quality determinations (like “happy” and “sad”) that listeners attach to sounds they hear. Yet the intricacies of deeper psychological processes and emotions involved in music have received limited attention in most neuroscientific studies.

Uncovering these processes requires additional collaboration between the fields of psychology and music. Music therapy has already been shown “to help people overcome a broad range of psychological and physical problems.”⁶ Research psychologists have more recently articulated the distinctive value of interdisciplinary studies of music as follows:

[Despite] psychology’s general focus on emotional problems (e.g. anxiety, depression)...studies of music and emotion may help to ‘restore the balance’ between positive and negative emotion in the affective sciences. Positive emotions dominate in musical experiences (cf. Sloboda & Juslin; Becker; Juslin et al; Sloboda; Gabrielsson), and [these] must be reflected in self-report(s)...used to measure subjective feeling (Zentner & Eerola, this volume).⁷

By investigating the most positive experiences of music through subjective accounts, psychologists may help “restore balance” to the mental health field, as well as help neuroscientists unravel those deeper mental processes in need of further exploration.

Despite advances in research regarding music listening and creating, relatively few scientific studies specifically examine the performance of music, and even fewer studies investigate music from the musician’s perspective. Performing musicians rely on

⁶ Daniel J. Levitin, *This is Your Brain on Music: The Science of a Human Obsession* (New York: Plume, 2006), p. 227.

⁷ *Handbook of Music and Emotion: Theory, Research, Applications*, ed. by Patrik N. Juslin and John A. Sloboda (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010) [Chapter 33 “The Past, Present, and Future of Music and Emotion Research,” by Patrik N. Juslin and John A. Sloboda], p. 941.

aspects of listening as well as creating in order to make adjustments while interpreting music. Studies limited to the elementary levels of music, however, give me added reason for concern. Rather than focusing on the most positive attributes and benefits of music that result from complete engagement in the creation or performance of music, most studies focus on the benefits of idle or passive listening. While it is true that most people who listen to music are not professional musicians, surely there are fruitful areas of research, and important conclusions to draw, from the study of individuals who have dedicated their lives to music. One is compelled to ask: is there other, perhaps more significant, knowledge that can be learned by the study of professional, high-functioning musicians?

What *IS* most valuable about music? For many performing musicians, their complete engagement in the musical art, including sharing the music with others, is the source of the highest benefits and indeed the *sine qua non* of music. Can an investigation into the highest ideals of music – from the perspective of top performers – serve to further interdisciplinary research? I believe that the answer is yes. By giving world-class performing musicians a voice – using their actual words to describe what they think and how they feel, especially during optimal performances – I hope that future neuroscientific and psychological researchers might, through new interdisciplinary experiments involving music performance, learn more about how music and the brain work. The growing potential in this type of interdisciplinary research may provide greater insight into the most profound benefits of music and its significant power and importance in all human cultures.

For the sake of consistency, the idea of “optimal performance” can be linked to that of “optimal experience” as generalized by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, as follows:

Optimal experience happens when the information that keeps coming into awareness is congruent with goals.... There is no need to worry, no reason to question one’s adequacy.... Optimal experiences are situations in which attention can be freely invested to achieve a person’s goals, because there is no disorder to straighten out, no threat for the self to defend against.... [They are often referred to as] flow experiences.⁸

Other authors have simplified the definition of “flow” to be “characterized as an experience in which the subject’s skills are fully preoccupied with a task.”⁹ Rather than making a casual effort to learn and to present musical material to an audience, the performer utilizes high degrees of intention, commitment, and intensity at every level of study, rehearsal and delivery. As such, the mental, emotional, and physical processes performers experience potentially mark a significant difference in brain activity between musicians and non-musicians that researchers can further explore. Such intense processes help musicians achieve an optimal performance generally experienced by them as an elimination (or at least a significant reduction) of the psychological and physical barriers between themselves and the audience. This direct connection allows performers to musically communicate with other musicians and the audience so that all are not only engaged in the performance, but also taken by the performance into a musical realm of existence often accompanied by a sense of timelessness, and an acute awareness of the personally significant meaning of the moment.

⁸ Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, *Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience* (New York: HarperCollins, 1990), pp. 39-40.

⁹ *Musical Gestures: Sound, Movement, and Meaning*, ed. Rolf Inge Godøy and Marc Leman, (New York: Routledge, 2010), p. 139.

The Flute Soloist Questionnaire created for this project gathers subjective information from top flutists about their preparation practices and personal experiences of optimal musical communication. While the ability of great soloists to capture and sustain the attention of an audience, even just with subtle changes of tone, has intrigued me for many years, the motivation to research the topic of optimal communication resulted from negative experiences at concerts which left me feeling dull and tired, rather than alive and fulfilled.

This paper explores effective musical communication in the concert hall for three major reasons. First, there is a need for musicians to reach and recruit audiences for classical and contemporary music. While economic and cultural changes have greatly affected traditional concert attendance over the last fifty years in particular, some of the disassociation of audiences from classical music surely is due in part to unengaged or unmoving performances. If so, then perhaps advocating for musically meaningful communication could enhance performances and potentially grow audiences.

Second, exploring optimal communication could help future performers flourish. By discovering or developing skills and strategies used by top performers, musicians can enhance their craft. The ability to consistently communicate with audiences in musically compelling and effective ways may explain why some musicians have thrived in concert hall careers today while others have not, even given relatively equal levels of technical prowess. Musicians have a notable responsibility. With their power to harness and direct audience emotions, to heal and soothe the psyche, and even to alter states of being through music, great performers still have ample opportunity to draw audiences into a concert hall setting simply through an improved experience of the music itself.

Third, the relatively recent surge of interest in musicians from researchers in both psychological and scientific fields, as discussed previously, warrants attention from the musical community. Musicians have an opportunity to collaborate in new areas of research. While some research does exist concerning effective musical communication, there is significantly more data available from an audience perspective than from a performer's. The hope is that this document might begin to fill a gap of research between music, psychology, and science that will inspire further research from musicians' perspectives.

This study focuses on the soloist's path to direct musical communication. Through a subjective questionnaire, thirty-eight flute soloists describe their experiences performing concertos (flute with orchestra) in the traditional concert hall setting. With emphasis on clarifying the most meaningful musical moments in performance, and identifying the important strategies and procedures these artists use to optimize performances, this study additionally includes a brief discussion about collaboration (involving a specific performer/composer relationship), and a sample of a performer's self-observations while performing a movement of the Christopher Rouse *Flute Concerto*. This primary source study endeavors to supply useful information for the aspiring soloist and advanced or professional level flutist, as well as preliminary data about artists' experiences of optimal performance and communication with an audience for the purpose of potentially contributing to future interdisciplinary research associated with music.

CHAPTER 2

METHODS / FLUTE SOLOIST QUESTIONNAIRE

In order to explore and clarify the processes involved in meaningful musical communication, that is, palpable connections between performer and audience, this project focuses upon aspects of soloists' preparation and performance. The concerto context, involving a soloist and an orchestra in the traditional concert hall setting, is a main feature of the study, highlighting the soloists' extended opportunity to engage directly with both an audience and with a substantial number of musicians in the orchestra.

The Flute Soloist Questionnaire was administered in survey and interview format. Out of 72 emailed invitations to flute soloists, 38 flutists (or 53%) participated in this study. These 38 flute soloists (listed on p. 11) represent a broad range of career stages and a variety of performing genres, from early- and mid-career soloists to internationally established artists. The flutists are traditional concerto performers, orchestral musicians, new music specialists, and performers of jazz, fusion and world music. Some of these flutists perform in all of the genres mentioned, in addition to chamber music. Since opportunities for building a successful music career for most flutists today often depend on the ability to perform expertly in a variety of musical styles, the analyses for this paper will consider the entire group of flutists as a whole, rather than categorizing each flutist under one specialty title. What all these flutists share is a degree of national or international prominence. They clearly are doing many, if not most, things right, things that have allowed them to succeed where so many others have not. Through studies of these successful soloists and, from their perspective, their own abilities to engage with

audiences non-verbally (as opposed to using program notes, discussion, and visual aids), this paper aims to reveal artists' definitions of optimal communication and furthermore, to clarify what effective performers go through, work on, and do in preparation and in performance in order to optimally communicate with an audience.

The source of the inquiries examined in this study resulted from concerns, issues, practices, and parameters that surfaced through my own search to enhance personal performances throughout the years. My recent experience learning and performing parts of the Christopher Rouse *Flute Concerto* also contributed to questions raised in this study. The organization of the questionnaire divides these inquiries into the following three sections: Preliminary Questions (nos. 1-3), Preparation / Performance Questions (nos. 4-9), and Specific Questions concerning the Christopher Rouse *Flute Concerto* (nos. 10-12) for those who have performed it. Additional questions were asked specifically to renowned flute soloist Carol Wincenc, who personally worked with Christopher Rouse and premiered the *Flute Concerto*. These latter questions and Carol's responses form the basis of the "Collaboration – A Brief Discussion" section of this paper (p. 72).

Respondents to the questionnaire were invited to describe, in their own words, what they experience as palpable connections between themselves and the audience, to explain how they recognize moments in which those connections do *not* occur, and to offer details on how (if at all) they prepare for such moments to occur. These performers also articulated the kind of balance involved in presenting their own intentions with respect to those of the composer. They outlined practical tools and offered advice for performing persuasively, memorizing, and for projecting beyond the stage. The soloists

also indicated the relative importance of 14 parameters set forth by the author, which include the following: musical structure, emotional journey, memory, comfort level with orchestra or concert hall, focus and concentration, humility and confidence, physical freedom, connecting with the spirit (or power that convinces of the truth, the essence), mastery and flow, creativity and play, belief/trust/love, finding value and meaning in the work, understanding the work through intuition, and aspects of exercise. The Important Parameters Chart and Analysis (Chapter 6, p. 46) more extensively examines these 14 parameters. In all, 10 of the 12 questions in the Flute Soloist Questionnaire are addressed in the specified chapters that follow. The remaining 2 questions either comprise general background information or insignificant analyzable data. To view the Invitation letters and Flute Soloist Questionnaire, please see the Appendix, pp. 87-89.

LIST OF FLUTE SOLOIST PARTICIPANTS

- | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 Claudia Anderson | 20 Eric Lamb |
| 2 Ulrike Anton | 21 Rhonda Larson |
| 3 Emily Beynon | 22 Laurel Ann Maurer |
| 4 Sharon Bezaly | 23 Demarre McGill |
| 5 Wissam Boustany | 24 Greg Milliren |
| 6 Bonita Boyd | 25 Conor Nelson |
| 7 Marie-Hélène Breault | 26 Sergio Pallottelli |
| 8 Leone Buyse | 27 Amy Porter |
| 9 Linda Chatterton | 28 (Catherine Ramirez) |
| 10 Viviana Cumplido | 29 Tatjana Ruhland |
| 11 Aralee Dorough | 30 Gary Schocker |
| 12 Michael Faust | 31 David Shostac |
| 13 Jean Ferrandis | 32 Mimi Stillman |
| 14 Jennifer Grim | 33 Mary Stolper |
| 15 Viviana Guzman | 34 Caen Thomason-Redus |
| 16 Susan Hoeppner | 35 Jim Walker |
| 17 Christina Jennings | 36 Jessica Warren-Acosta |
| 18 Katherine Kemler | 37 Carol Wincenc |
| 19 Adam Kuenzel | 38 Laurel Zucker |

PART I

WHAT SOLOISTS DO TO OPTIMIZE PERFORMANCES (Nos. 4, 3, 2, 5 and 9 from Flute Soloist Questionnaire)

What do successful soloists do to prepare and to perform optimally? If they are successful – whether they happen to be performers at the beginning of their careers, strong mid-career artists, or iconic performers recognized around the world – they must be doing something right. This section of the study addresses persuasive performance, memorization, factors involved in projecting (sound, music, and/or the performance itself) beyond the stage, and analyses of some of the parameters that these artists consider necessary to performing optimally. A summary of practical advice for optimizing performances and communication is provided in the following two lists: “The Top Twelve Practices for Persuasive Performing” and “Five Categories of General Advice.” Through the experiences of flute soloists representing diverse career stages, as well as a broad range of performing careers – including traditional concerto performers, orchestral musicians, new music specialists, and performers of jazz, fusion and world music – this section sets up the philosophical and practical context for the deeper work of solo artists as covered in sections of the study that follow.

CHAPTER 3

PERSUASIVE PERFORMANCE

“After technical mastery has been achieved, are there specific things you do to feel ready to perform persuasively?” (No. 4 from Flute Soloist Questionnaire)

The terminology used for this question gave rise to a variety of subjective reasoning about the concept of mastery with regard to communicating persuasively. Does an understanding of the technical aspects of a piece (for example, deciding which fingerings to use for a series of pitches, or figuring out how rhythmic passages sound) come *before* a grasp of the musical ideas? In other words, is technical mastery a separate function from persuasive performing, or from generally making music at the highest level? Because of the questions raised by the terminology (or perhaps, despite them), this study revealed fascinating glimpses into the philosophical views held by these musicians about the concepts of learning and mastery. Of the 38 soloists interviewed, 9 discuss various learning processes that arise from the technical and musical aspects of a piece. Conversely, 26 flute soloists answered the posed question with general practical advice, which essentially amounts to a listing of the various maintenance and intensifying practices they utilize before a performance. This section concludes with a discussion about the overall results from this persuasive performance portion of the survey.

Philosophical views

Which comes first: the technique or the music? For 9 (or 24%) of the 38 flute soloists who participated in this study, that was NOT the question. American soloist Mimi Stillman explains why: “The question suggests that technical mastery is worked towards first, before other issues, but I do not learn music this way. I work on technical

aspects at the same time as all the artistic elements that are part of preparing a piece of music.”¹⁰ Likewise, Marie-Hélène Breault, flutist and director of the Canadian new music ensemble, E27, confirms a similar process: “Technical mastery is achieved in parallel with understanding music in my case, each [...] activity influencing the other.”¹¹ International concert soloist and recording artist Sharon Bezaly states that the “technical and musical processing go hand in hand.”¹² From these accounts, learning the mechanics of a new piece of music occurs *simultaneously* with the unraveling of the musical message, rather than in tandem (one following the other).

Other flutists who disagreed with the wording of this question offer a very different perspective. International soloists Jean Ferrandis and Wissam Boustany each explain that, rather than developing the technique first and the musical ideas second, the reverse is also possible. “If [the music] is clear in my mind – after, the technique comes naturally. I can reach only because I know what I want. I can persuade people only if my music is clear.”¹³ “Quite often I can only master a passage, once I know what I want from it, in the first place.”¹⁴ The idea of uncovering the ‘music behind the notes’ prior to mastering the notes themselves suggests that concept precedes realization, as far as some interpreters are concerned. Tatjana Ruhland, principal flutist of the Stuttgart Radio Symphony Orchestra agrees: “the musical expression will give the [...] way the technical

¹⁰ Mimi Stillman, Soloist, soloist, Yamaha Performing Artist, founder of Dolce Suono Chamber Music Concert Series, Emailed Questionnaire Response, June 23, 2011.

¹¹ Marie-Hélène Breault, artistic director of *Erreur de Type 27* (E27) (Québécois contemporary ensemble), Emailed Questionnaire Response, June 20, 2011.

¹² Sharon Bezaly, soloist and BIS recording artist, Emailed Questionnaire Response, June 30, 2011.

¹³ Jean Ferrandis, soloist, conductor and flute professor at the *École Normale* in Paris and at California State University Fullerton, Telephone Interview, June 1, 2011.

¹⁴ Wissam Boustany, soloist, founder of *Towards Humanity* and flute professor at The Royal Northern College of Music, Emailed Questionnaire Response, May 10, 2011.

mastery will have to follow.”¹⁵ Thus, it can also be said that for these players, discovering the artistic message of a piece of music *first* can then both suggest and inform the technical details needed to produce the work.

In contrast to these philosophical views regarding the connected nature of technical and musical learning, one artist out of the 26, who offered mostly practical advice, points out an equally plausible view that completely *separates* technical learning from musical learning. According to the international Canadian soloist Susan Hoeppner, “sometimes [one must] separate the technique from the music...just working out the technical knots, is just how it needs to be, and then you can add it into the piece...But to think that you could play a piece and the technique would just fall into place – it doesn’t happen that way – I wish it did! – but it doesn’t.”¹⁶ In an article to be published by the National Flute Association in 2012, Susan explains that the technique she speaks of concerns the development of “fast and even, controlled fingers.”¹⁷ Rather than acquiring such a technique through the repertoire or music, she explains that the development of such finger facility can result from a structured, disciplined approach consisting of slow practice, repetitions of small groupings of notes, and applications of different rhythms to those small groupings.

It is interesting, and perhaps even encouraging, to notice that even soloists performing at the international level still encounter technical challenges that need to

¹⁵ Tatjana Ruhland, principal flutist of Stuttgart Radio Symphony Orchestra, Emailed Questionnaire Response, June 11, 2011.

¹⁶ Susan Hoeppner, soloist, recording artist and flute professor at the University of Toronto, Telephone Interview, May 15, 2011.

¹⁷ Susan Hoeppner, “Making the Most of Every Performance: Live Performance Preparation: by Susan Hoeppner,” manuscript copy for the National Flute Association Pedagogy Book, Vol. 2 (expected publication, August, 2012).

continually be refined and conquered. Author Robert Jourdain in his book *Music, The Brain, and Ecstasy*, explains the purpose for the isolated nature of this kind of work:

Virtuosi concentrate on fragments, seldom playing the entire piece, and they correct wrong notes by playing them in the context of a larger phrase. They understand that the cause of a bad note often lies not in the motions for that note, but in the motions for the notes around it. And so they correct wrong notes by working on the relations between notes, by reorganizing the deeper levels in the motor and conceptual hierarchies from which the notes arise. In so doing, they deepen these hierarchies and make them more self-aware and manipulable.... The sheer quantity of practice is also important.¹⁸

The ultimate goal of such work is arriving at the moment of truth on stage having done all the work and really feeling, and being prepared.¹⁹

A more abstract response to the posed question raises another view. According to Jim Walker, renowned jazz artist and soloist, "If I have ever 'mastered' ANYTHING, I certainly hope to be a persuasive performer."²⁰ This statement altogether bypasses the division into terms such as "technical" and "musical" mastery, as well as the perceptions that the former comes before the latter, vice versa, or that they occur at the same time. Instead, this statement suggests that mastery and persuasiveness are one and the same. As such, it may also imply a consuming *wholeness of purpose* within the process of learning that binds the acquisition of mastery to that of persuasive performing.

¹⁸ Robert Jourdain, *Music, The Brain, and Ecstasy: How Music Captures Our Imagination* (New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1997), p. 232-233

¹⁹ Susan Hoepfner, "Making the Most of Every Performance."

²⁰ Jim Walker, soloist, studio recording artist, jazz flutist with Free Flight, former principal flutist of Los Angeles Philharmonic, and flute professor at the University of Southern California and the Colburn School, Emailed Questionnaire Response, May 30, 2011.

Practical advice

Out of the 38 respondents, 26 soloists (68%) answered the posed question by offering specific tactics that help them feel ready to perform persuasively. Many of these flutists used similar strategies to maintain and intensify their practice and preparation prior to an upcoming performance. Their responses can be grouped into a list of the *Top Twelve Practices for Persuasive Performing*, as follows:

1. **MOCK PERFORMANCE** – For many respondents, performing a composition in an informal setting prior to the actual performance helps build confidence and a sense of readiness. Since the first performance can often be unpredictable, a mock performance in a safe testing environment allows the artist to “work the kinks out.”²¹ Run-throughs, “without stopping for mistakes,”²² help artists to assess their own concentration throughout the entire work, as well as their current level of preparation. Mock performances often involve live piano accompaniment or CD accompaniment.
2. **LISTENING** – Several of these artists listen to various recordings of the work, as well as to works by the composer’s contemporaries. Many of them also record and listen to themselves regularly. While some use listening to check on details, such as intonation or

²¹ Viviana Cumplido, principal flutist of the Phoenix Symphony, Emailed Questionnaire Response, June 15, 2011.

²² Adam Kuenzel, principal flutist of the Minnesota Orchestra, Personal Interview, June 11, 2011.

phrasing issues, one artist mentioned that it is important to “be familiar with [his] best and worst [playing]...to know that even [his] worst playing can have an impact.”²³

3. **CONTEXT** – The historical and cultural context of a composition also place high among the practices of top performers. These artists use context “as a basis for stylistic decisions,”²⁴ and to know “what is going on in [the composers’] lives...to get a temperament of the composer.”²⁵

4. **SCORE STUDY** – These soloists stress the importance of understanding the whole composition, and particularly, how and in what ways the flute part relates to the orchestral part. One artist mentioned learning “the entire piece from the score [first], and then going to the flute part.”²⁶ Another soloist tries to “study every millimeter of the piece, the accompaniment, the history...to find out what it means...emotionally [in order] to communicate it to the audience in the most effective way.”²⁷

5. **DRILL** – “Practice, practice, practice” is a familiar musician’s motto. Yet these artists emphasize the importance of repeatedly targeting the more difficult technical spots above

²³ Demarre McGill, principal flutist with the Seattle Symphony Orchestra, Telephone Interview, July 13, 2011.

²⁴ Leone Buyse, former assistant principal of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, the Joseph and Ida Kirkland Mullen Professor of Flute, and Woodwind Department Chair at Rice University, Emailed Questionnaire Response, May 21, 2011.

²⁵ Carol Wincenc, soloist, former principal flutist of St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, and flute professor at the Juilliard School, Telephone Interview, May 29, 2011.

²⁶ Eric Lamb, flutist with the International Contemporary Ensemble (ICE), Emailed Questionnaire Response, June 24, 2011.

²⁷ Sergio Pallottelli, soloist, recitalist and teacher, Emailed Questionnaire Response, May 14, 2011.

all, rather than the slower or easier parts.²⁸ Practice is also noted as the main factor for building confidence to perform on stage.²⁹

6. SLOW PRACTICE – Like drill, slow practice is extremely valuable to these artists. Very slow and deliberate practice³⁰ gives the mind the time to inspect all technical issues and effectively solidify positive habits. One soloist suggests practicing a “fast movement at a slower tempo with the metronome [to] work on phrasing.... [And] slow movements at a faster tempo [to] find the simplest arc in the phrase.”³¹

7. MENTAL PRACTICE – For simplification purposes, the following practical advice offered by these soloists has been grouped here under Mental Practice: believing in oneself, honesty, integrity, focus, being convinced by and committed to the piece, and “quieting the mind and body.”³² One artist explains the need to “practice getting into the proper ‘headspace’ to perform [...] in a sincere and authentic way that will resonate with the audience.”³³ The degree of importance of several of the above factors will be seen later in the Important Parameters Chart and Analysis in Chapter 6.

²⁸ Viviana Guzman, soloist, composer, producer, dancer, poet, fire walker & world traveler, Telephone Interview, June 11, 2011.

²⁹ Susan Hoeppner, Telephone Interview.

³⁰ Viviana Guzman, Telephone Interview.

³¹ Jennifer Grim, soloist, chamber musician and flute professor at the University of Nevada Las Vegas, Emailed Questionnaire Response, June 3, 2011.

³² Gary Schocker, soloist, composer and flute faculty at New York University, Emailed Questionnaire Response, May 31, 2011.

³³ Greg Milliren, associate principal flutist of the Minnesota Orchestra, Emailed Questionnaire Response, June 10, 2011.

8. **BODY PRACTICE** – Specific body practices of these artists include breathing exercises (for strength and increased lung capacity), yoga (for flexibility), and Alexander technique lessons (for balance and realignment of the body), especially before important performances.³⁴

9. **SCOPE** – Accessing the entire emotional gamut of a composition,³⁵ embodying musical gesture, and nurturing authentic musical conviction contribute to a true sense of scope.³⁶ This practice often intensifies as other factors (such as mental practice, score study, context and drill) become more firmly established in working toward a performance.

10. **STRUCTURE to GESTURE** – Inherent to making music is the translating of structural elements into musical gestures, based on the compositional language used. Yet these artists do not stop refining these gestures once they have achieved an initial understanding. A distinguishing feature of a persuasive performer is that this artist will “continue to think about the musical meaning of phrases and gestures rather than allow them to [ever] be just notes.”³⁷

³⁴ Ulrike Anton, soloist and flute faculty at Institute for the International Education of Students (IES) in Vienna, Emailed Questionnaire Response, June 14, 2011.

³⁵ Catherine Ramirez (document author), soloist and flute professor at St. Olaf College, Questionnaire Response, July 4, 2011.

³⁶ Christina Jennings, soloist and flute professor at the University of Colorado Boulder, Emailed Questionnaire Response, May 25, 2011.

³⁷ Caen Thomason-Redus, soloist and flute professor at the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee, Emailed Questionnaire Response, June 15, 2011.

11. **VISUALIZATION** – Having “special pictures [in mind] for each piece or phrase [...] helps [the soloist] perform the piece with much more verve, concentration and consistency.”³⁸ Another artist “visualizes [the] performance from start to finish.”³⁹ Visualizing, like a mock performance, allows the artist to experience and cultivate the intention of how the performance will go, before the actual performance. And like mental practice, visualization assists the development of focus, concentration, and commitment.

12. **HIGH STANDARD OF CRITICISM** – All the practices mentioned help artists work toward an ideal. Reaching for this ideal, however, requires a critical and discerning ear, body and mind. “Being very critical in preparation always gives [...] just that extra confidence.”⁴⁰ With great caution to avoid negative self-criticism, artists can use a high standard of criticism to effectively evaluate, change and improve minute details of their performance.

Additional advice – The following soloists offered supplementary insight into other aspects involved in persuasive performing:

Regarding control over the performance environment, Yamaha Performing Artist Linda Chatterton explains, “If you [the artist] are committed to the piece, the audience feels that. The only thing you can control, in any sort of performance situation, is your

³⁸ Michael Faust, soloist and principal flutist with WDR Sinfonieorchester in Cologne, Emailed Questionnaire Response, May 31, 2011.

³⁹ Linda Chatterton, soloist and Yamaha Performing Artist, Personal Interview, May 31, 2011.

⁴⁰ Ulrike Anton, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

own experience [...]. Make it as enjoyable for yourself as possible, and be true to what the composer says and what [you] want to say.”⁴¹ By abandoning elements outside of the artist’s individual control, the artist instead pays attention to personal reactions to the experience of performing. If the performer has persuaded him/herself, the audience has a better chance of being persuaded as well.

According to flutist Mary Stolper, developing the whole person is just as important as developing the music for performance. “You have to be more than just a good flutist. YOU the person have to be [...] developed as well as having the technical passages down in the music. How can you express your feelings if you don’t have any?”⁴²

Highlighting respect for individuality, flutist Viviana Guzman says this: “As far as being persuasive – we’re all created differently – everyone is beautiful in their own right. If we just follow our own heart, our own feelings, and stand by that, that’s the most important. It’s all those things that are deep inside that we need to bring out and speak through our music, through our instrument.”⁴³

Discussion of persuasive performance results

The wide variety of responses arising from the posed survey question reveals that artists perceive the learning of technical and musical elements of a work in different ways. Some of them identify with a cyclic (as opposed to a linear) process in which

⁴¹ Linda Chatterton, Personal Interview. This and other advice from Linda’s extensive work on the psychology of optimum performance can be read in her book *It Sounded Better at Home!* which will be released later in 2011.

⁴² Mary Stolper, soloist, principal flutist of the Grant Park Symphony and flute professor at DePaul University, Emailed Questionnaire Response, June 10, 2011.

⁴³ Viviana Guzman, Telephone Interview.

technical challenges and musical ideas influence one another, or may even occur simultaneously, throughout the learning process. Others observe that technical issues can best be overcome only after a musical understanding has been reached. Alternatively, some artists distinguish the importance of isolating the practice of technical issues, separate from the refining of musical ideas, in certain cases. And yet other artists notice that work toward a persuasive interpretation can come through wholeness of purpose in mastering the music, such as soloist Amy Porter, who “learns the music and plays the music.”⁴⁴ While the learning processes vary greatly from performer to performer, all of these artists ultimately gear their learning towards achieving higher levels of ease and mastery to facilitate the delivery of music to an audience.

Through the information gathered about these learning perspectives, philosophical views about learning, and the practical advice provided by these artists, a resulting direct correlation could be seen between confidence level with a piece of music and persuasive performance of that piece. Confidence, which will also be discussed later in a different context concerning important parameters for soloists, refers in this case to a level of trust and knowledge built through familiarity with the music. The more an artist understands the entire work and the intentions discovered through the work, the more apt he or she is to be convinced by the work, and thus to be able to convince the audience of it, so as to share the music more completely.

While some factors for a persuasive performance are beyond a performer’s control, artists focus on building the necessary confidence level through means that they can control. A commitment to thorough preparation permeates the process. Preparation

⁴⁴ Amy Porter, soloist and flute professor at the University of Michigan, Emailed Questionnaire Response, May 31, 2011.

for these artists involves mock performances, visualization, score and listening study, mental and physical practice, slow and intense drill, distillation of context, embodiment of gestures and emotional scope of the music, and adherence to the highest standards of excellence. It is also necessary to have patience to maintain and intensify these practices while working through the many steps toward the highest level of mastery. The thoroughness of preparation also increases the level of commitment to the music, to what the composer aims to say through the music, and to what both the composer and the performer seek to convey.

The responses to this question persuasively demonstrate that world-class performers seek more than just a surface level of understanding. They want to and need to, in a way, *become* the work in order to persuasively perform it. On one hand, this suggests that there is the need for artists to have broad life experience, in order to access and draw upon a wide and diverse range of emotions for whatever may arise in the music. Affinities with particular repertoire also contribute to a musician's fluency with a work. A performer's personal experiences and unique perspectives contribute to how he or she will approach, and ultimately perform, the music. On the other hand, *becoming* the work also suggests that how a phrase feels within the body, after numerous iterations that evolve toward an ideal of how the artists thinks that gesture should sound, marks a significant step in the preparation process. Embodied musical gesture, for example, is a literal indication of what an artist physically feels – the music is not just written on the page, it is written in their body memory. Great confidence can be gained by internalizing a musical work to such a degree, which thus opens an artist more readily to the possibility of performing persuasively.

CHAPTER 4

MEMORIZATION

“Do you typically memorize your concerti? ... What is your particular memorizing process?” (No. 3 from Flute Soloist Questionnaire)

Singers, string players, and pianists traditionally perform concerti from memory.

Memorization for flutists, however, is not as widespread a practice. Why do some flute soloists memorize their music, while others do not? What are the benefits and drawbacks of memorizing? How does memorizing music affect the performance? This section of the study focuses on these questions and how they relate to optimal performance, and concludes with a brief discussion of the memorization data.

Why soloists memorize

Of the 38 flute participants, 29% (or 11) specified that they always, or nearly always, perform concerti from memory. Several soloists indicated that memorizing a work is part of their learning process, which helps them not only understand and know the music better, but also deepen their interpretation.⁴⁵ The topic of committing a work to memory also elicited responses involving the relationship with the audience. Memorizing helps “the artist relate to the music and the audience,”⁴⁶ “have a greater connection with the music and the audience,”⁴⁷ “eliminate the barrier between performer and audience [...], and provide more opportunity to connect.”⁴⁸ The artist who has

⁴⁵ Sharon Bezaly, Emailed Questionnaire Response. Similar opinions given by soloists Ulrike Anton, Viviana Guzman, Susan Hoepfner, and Mimi Stillman.

⁴⁶ Wissam Boustany, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

⁴⁷ Conor Nelson, soloist and flute professor at Bowling Green State University, Emailed Questionnaire Response, May 27, 2011.

⁴⁸ Jessica Warren-Acosta, soloist and flutist with Caminos del Inka, Emailed Questionnaire Response, June 23, 2011.

memorized the music essentially removes the physical barrier that a music stand might present in the traditional concert hall setting. By not reading the music from a score, the artist (rather than leaning forward or down over a music stand) may open his or her posture to one that is more erect, thus improving breathing, carriage and overall stage presence – all of which can effect communication with an audience. Memorization is also associated with greater freedom of expression, including greater freedom of motion onstage.⁴⁹ Soloist Christina Jennings elucidates the role of memorizing a concerto:

As long as [...] the memory [is] not [the] driving thought onstage, then the experience is much more authentic if the piece is memorized. Communication is at a premium in concerto performances. The audience, the conductor, the orchestra...so many different groups to make connections with [...]. If the [music] stand and the music are competing with this, I feel paralyzed.⁵⁰

With the music solidly memorized, the artist's intention shifts away from reading music to sharing the music directly with those involved in the performance and with the audience.

Why soloists occasionally memorize

Many of the flutists surveyed, specifically 47% (or 18 out of 38), sometimes memorize a concerto and sometimes do not, depending on the circumstance and repertoire. These artists acknowledge the aforementioned benefits of memorizing, and additionally, memorizing for music involving theatrics⁵¹ as well as for enhancing an artist's trust in him/herself.⁵² However, they also recognize limitations of time. Learning music 'by heart' requires an extensive amount of practice time for most musicians. Busy

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Christina Jennings, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

⁵¹ Marie-Hélène Breault, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

⁵² Jennifer Grim, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

performing and/or teaching schedules, short notice for concerts, last-minute revisions to world premiere compositions, and infrequent or single performances of a certain concerto, are all factors that may lead an artist to perform with a score. The traditional standard repertoire is more often performed from memory, such as concerti by Mozart or Quantz. However, several artists said that they perform from a score for recent or less familiar compositions.

In some cases, memorizing may have been important in the early stages of a career, but as the musician becomes older and more established (and busier!) it may no longer be a priority.⁵³ Or it may also be too risky a procedure, as explained by Laurel Ann Maurer: “I did not have enough memorizing as a child and this skill is difficult for me [...]. I know a lot of music by memory, but I rarely perform by memory. One of the other reasons I feel it is difficult is that memorization on the flute must be without any visual help. It must all be aural and kinetic. I find this lack of the visual a difficulty.”⁵⁴ While memorizing may help the learning process and deepen interpretations, for some, memorizing may encumber the learning process, especially if an artist’s strength involves visual sensory input. Beyond time constraints and type of repertoire, learning styles and priorities also affect whether or not an artist chooses to perform from memory.

Why soloists don’t memorize

The 16% (or 6) of the 38 flutists interviewed who do not perform from memory likewise point out the logistics of working with stringent time limitations and the

⁵³ Leone Buyse, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

⁵⁴ Laurel Ann Maurer, soloist and recording artist, Emailed Questionnaire Response, June 10, 2011.

infrequency of performing the same piece more than once in a relatively short period of time. Comfort, fear, and priorities also factor into why these artists perform with a score rather than from memory. As Laurel Ann Maurer indicated earlier, having a visual reference is important for some artists. Being “more comfortable with a score”⁵⁵ or, in turn, “not [being] comfortable”⁵⁶ playing from memory, may simply be a preference, and (so long as the music stand is low and unobtrusive) may have no negative impact on optimal performance. For high-profile artists, the pressure of meeting both audiences’ and their own standards of perfection can weigh heavily in favor of reading from a score. Being “scared of making a memory slip”⁵⁷ can feel as though the artist’s “spunk goes out the window,”⁵⁸ detracting the artist from communicating the music. Sometimes, artists can also be uninterested in the memorizing process and would rather spend the time pursuing other interests, such as composing.⁵⁹ In all these cases, the resulting performance will be more convincing if the artist feels more comfortable and confident reading from a score, rather than performing from memory.

Discussion of memorization results

While most flute soloists interviewed agree that there are many benefits to performing from memory – including greater freedom of expression and opportunity for connecting with an audience – 47% determine whether or not to memorize a work based

⁵⁵ Sergio Pallottelli, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

⁵⁶ Katherine Kemler, soloist and flute professor at Louisiana State University, Emailed Questionnaire Response, May 27, 2011.

⁵⁷ Adam Kuenzel, Personal Interview.

⁵⁸ Viviana Cumplido, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

⁵⁹ Laurel Zucker, soloist, recording artist and flute professor at California State University Sacramento, Emailed Questionnaire Response, May 13, 2011.

largely on limitations of time. When these artists can devote the necessary time to memorize a work, issues of repertoire, learning styles and priorities can also affect that decision. Those who do often perform from memory, or 29% from this study, do so mainly as a result of their learning process, and for the purpose of relating with the audience more directly. Soloists who usually choose to perform from a score, or 6% of flutists interviewed, tend to be more comfortable with a visual reference of the music, and opt for this arrangement as a means of preventing memory slips and saving time for other priorities.

The meticulous nature of learning a piece of music well, as noted in the Persuasive Performance section, can lead to a more confident and thus convincing performance, regardless of whether or not these artists play from a musical score. As far as memorization is concerned, the additional effort needed to memorize music can certainly have an impact on both the artist and the audience. The practice of memorizing, which all of these artists have had, is something that all flutists need to experience – most fundamentally, in order to understand their own learning process and facility with memorization, and to recognize the level of communication they are able to elicit in performance of a memorized work. These artists have tested their memory, in practice and performance, and have each determined for themselves the methods which lead to more communicative performances, and which methods detract from that communication.

For several recommended tips given by these soloists to help with memorizing, see *Nine Memorizing Tips* on the following page:

Nine Memorizing Tips

Below are some memorizing tips offered by these artists to help with the memorizing process:

- 1) Memorize little by little, everyday⁶⁰
- 2) Take a measure at a time, and perform in a safe environment first⁶¹
- 3) The majority of memorization comes from repetition, but [one] can also write out difficult passages from memory to make sure [they are] correct⁶²
- 4) [A memorizing system] can involve analysis, giving fanciful names to sections [of music], cutting and pasting the music, using flash cards, making a map of sorts⁶³
- 5) Memorize in different ways: physically and mentally – the fingers and body on the one side, the brain on the other; like learning a language – by speaking and by memorizing vocabulary⁶⁴
- 6) Memorize by ear then by eye⁶⁵
- 7) Know the structure as much as possible; start at the end and memorize backwards; be able to play to the end from any place in the piece. Memorize by phrase or section, and gradually put bigger pieces together; know the details of the phrases thoroughly, especially transitions from one phrase or section to the next⁶⁶
- 8) Start from the back of the concerto (play the end more than the beginning)⁶⁷
- 9) Use the piano reduction, repetition, drill, and play with a recording⁶⁸

⁶⁰ Viviana Guzman, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

⁶¹ Rhonda Larson, Grammy Award winning soloist, recording artist, and leader of Ventus, Emailed Questionnaire Response, May 17, 2011.

⁶² Jessica Warren-Acosta, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

⁶³ Aralee Dorough, principal flutist of the Houston Symphony, Emailed Questionnaire Response, June 17, 2011.

⁶⁴ Michael Faust, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

⁶⁵ Amy Porter, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

⁶⁶ David Shostak, soloist, principal flutist of the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, flute professor at California State University Northridge and the Henri Mancini Institute, Emailed Questionnaire Response, June 15, 2011.

⁶⁷ Mary Stolper, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

⁶⁸ Carol Wincenc, Telephone Interview.

CHAPTER 5

PROJECTING BEYOND THE STAGE

“When playing a concerto, do you modify anything in your playing to perform ‘beyond’ the stage (such as physical subtleties...projection of air, etc.)?”
(No. 2 from Flute Soloist Questionnaire)

A concerto performance in the traditional concert hall setting usually takes place in a large hall, seating between 1,000 to 2,800 audience members, with one to three balconies extending in front of and above the stage. The musical forces usually involve a conductor and about 35 to 80 or more musicians in the orchestra playing behind the soloist. The potential for a flutist’s sound to be covered by such forces, in so large a space, is very high. Fortunately, composers who are well versed in the capabilities of the flute and the orchestra anticipate potential balance problems, and write music within a range and setting that allow the flute to be carried, rather than covered, by the orchestra. Even so, musicians on all sides of a concerto must maintain a vigilant awareness of balance and projection issues throughout rehearsals and performances. This portion of the study considers what solo flutists do to project their sound and music beyond the stage, in order to effectively reach the audience, and concludes with a discussion of the results concerning such projections beyond the stage.

Molding the performance

Of the 38 surveyed soloists, 58% (or 22) modify their performance in some way. Generally, these modifications can be grouped into the following categories: posture/eyes, gesture/drama, and sound/dynamics. To capture and sustain the attention of the audience in such a large space, the soloist needs to have a strong presence. Internationally known flutist and pedagogue Leone Buyse explains: “I become even

more aware of [...] excellent posture, which contributes so much to a feeling of ‘owning the stage.’ With many musicians around me, I want to establish a presence that will inspire collaboration and excitement, and engage the audience as well.”⁶⁹ Grammy Award winning flutist Rhonda Larson adds that, in performance, she gives “everything to the audience, and posture has a lot to do with this ‘projection.’”⁷⁰ Good posture, and the resulting powerful stage presence, clearly contributes to establishing a kind of energy that promotes attention and connection.

Besides an upright, strong and balanced posture on stage, natural movement and eye contact can also improve communication with an audience. Aralee Dorrough, principal flutist of the Houston Symphony, shares her experience with these kinds of physical modifications in performance:

I have had to do a lot of work on minimizing fidgeting and swaying, as I have observed that my playing suffers when I do. As a result [in the past], I stood very still; the result was good for me, I played well. (Our local newspaper critic was rather lukewarm, though, and I think my stillness had a lot to do with it.) Since then, having learned how to stand with balance and ‘just play’, I have been consciously working on ‘ADDING BACK’ movement. [At] my last concerto opportunity [...] I was able to enjoy moving more freely, while still keeping a good set up for sound production. I made eye contact with the audience frequently...looked at different sides of the hall...looked back at the orchestra. The result was: SO MANY positive comments, and very enthusiastic applause. There is no doubt in my mind that this enhanced the experience of the music to the audience!⁷¹

“Part of why we watch these performers with such passionate intensity is...the thrill that comes from witnessing someone taking chances,”⁷² to borrow a quote from a reigning diva of the opera world, opera singer Renée Fleming. While Aralee’s experience

⁶⁹ Leone Buyse, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

⁷⁰ Rhonda Larson, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

⁷¹ Aralee Dorrough, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

⁷² Renée Fleming, *The Inner Voice: The Making of a Singer* (New York: Penguin Group, 2004), p. 181.

emerges from an incremental and conscious process of experimentation with movement and eye contact (instead of abrupt modifications to the extreme), the courage she displayed in stretching her capabilities must also have contributed to favorable reactions from her listeners.

International soloist Carol Wincenc points out that any physical modifications in performance “depend on the drama of a piece.”⁷³ Integrating the body with the music can amplify, through natural gestures, whatever sentiment may be expressed. Considering the size of the hall, other artists find that modifying natural motions can enhance the experience for audience members sitting farthest from the stage. Some artists “aim to the cheap seats all the way in the back,”⁷⁴ or “exaggerate musical gestures,”⁷⁵ or use “more exaggerated, ‘hyper’ gestures”⁷⁶ in order to “project visually and through sound”⁷⁷ throughout the hall. These modifications are made in an effort to magnify, for the audience, the aural and visual elements of a concerto performance in a large concert hall. As confirmed in the book *Musical Gestures: Sound, Movement, and Meaning*, “it is indeed through gestures that we can perceive other persons’ intended engagement with music. This is an aspect of gesture that plays a fundamental role in communication.”⁷⁸

Soloists who modify aspects of sound or dynamics talk about air support, projection of air, perception of sound, volume and quality of sound, and resonance. At

⁷³ Carol Wincenc, Telephone Interview.

⁷⁴ Jessica Warren-Acosta, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

⁷⁵ Claudia Anderson, soloist, flutist in ZAWA! Flute Duo, principal flutist of Waterloo-Cedar Falls Symphony and flute professor at Grinnell College, Emailed Questionnaire Response, June 30, 2011.

⁷⁶ Christina Jennings, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

⁷⁷ Mimi Stillman, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

⁷⁸ *Musical Gestures: Sound, Movement, and Meaning*, ed. Rolf Inge Godøy and Marc Leman (New York: Routledge, 2010), p. 141.

the most fundamental level, in order to project beyond the stage, the artist must project the air⁷⁹ and a well-supported sound⁸⁰ beyond the stage. Rather than holding the sound back behind the music stand, or forcing the sound into an unfamiliar space, the artist projects the air in a healthy, well-supported way, so as to receive feedback about the hall's acoustics, or "qualities of a room that determine how sound is transmitted in it."⁸¹ Since the acoustics of a large concert hall vary greatly from those of a small practice room, a large teaching studio, a recital hall, or a club, gymnasium, and outdoor theatre (which tend to require additional amplification), the artist must make an "adjustment in [his/her] perception of sound."⁸² How a soloist interprets and utilizes the feedback loop of sonic information received from the performance space can have a direct effect on the performance. The broader the experience a soloist has with playing in a variety of spaces, the more familiar the artist can become with how those spaces work with sound and how his or her sound reacts in such spaces. With this knowledge, the soloist can then accurately choose to alter aspects of the sound (amplification, articulation, projection) in a hall that will respond to those changes, or conversely, refrain from exerting excessive effort to change an aspect of the sound in a hall that will not react to it. Simply projecting the air beyond the stage can help the artist begin to understand the hall and coax the sound to stretch, expand, and grow into that particular space.

⁷⁹ Ulrike Anton, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

⁸⁰ Mimi Stillman, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

⁸¹ "Acoustic definition," accessed July 26, 2011, http://www.google.com/#hl=en&q=acoustic&tbs=dfn:1&tbo=u&sa=X&ei=0x0wTtOGH8_YiALmlawr&sqi=2&ved=0CBUQkQ4&bav=on.2,or.r_gc.r_pw.&fp=7c84d19ee884f213&biw=1018&bih=454).

⁸² Jennifer Grim, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

Volume and quality of sound also come into play. International soloist Amy Porter notes that “the embouchure [lip aperture] has to be flexible to play louder and the body has to prepare for the volume it needs for projection.”⁸³ In addition to a stable and flexible set up for sound production, these artists mention that calling upon strength from the lower body⁸⁴ and accessing their “largest and most relaxed sound”⁸⁵ help increase the volume of sound projecting through the hall. By releasing key areas of the body from excess tension, such as the jaw, neck, shoulders, back, knees and ankles,⁸⁶ the artist can use the resonating capabilities of the body to strengthen the projection of the sound. Eric Lamb, flutist of the International Contemporary Ensemble (ICE), explains more about the functions of volume, resonance and quality of sound:

Playing a concerto [is] more about making a sound that is open and full. Therefore I don’t really think about ‘beauty’ of sound as I do when playing in small subsets of ICE or in classical or baroque chamber music settings. Honestly, I think of a sound that is rich and full. I had the pleasure of hearing [Emmanuel] Pahud [principal flutist of the Berlin Philharmonic] rehearse the Mozart G Major Concerto in Frankfurt with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra. It was an eye-opening experience. The amount of ‘noise’, resonance and projection that he got was staggering. I was sitting really close...about 10 feet away from him. My jaw dropped. So I moved back to a far end of the massive concert hall, and was amazed at the clarity of sound and intimacy that that sound projected. Its sort of that grit that violin soloists have in their sound, the sound projects, it gets out there, it is heard, and at the end of the day that’s what people come to hear. The art of it all is to be able to ebb and flow between those two worlds, the grit of a soloist and the charm of a chamber musician.⁸⁷

In this account, the quality of sound closest to the soloist contained more “noise” compared to the “clarity” of sound heard at the back of the hall. A deft, experienced soloist knows how to gage the projection, amount of resonance, and quality of sound over

⁸³ Amy Porter, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

⁸⁴ Conor Nelson, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

⁸⁵ Laurel Ann Maurer, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

⁸⁶ Catherine Ramirez (document author), Questionnaire Response.

⁸⁷ Eric Lamb, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

hundreds of feet in the distance, regardless of what they perceive in the sound up close. Skillful manipulating of the sound throughout the hall can optimize an audience's experience of the sound, and ultimately of the music.

Being the performance

Of the 38 surveyed soloists, 37% (or 14) either modify their awareness of breathing or in no way modify their performance. The areas of focus for these artists can be grouped into the following categories: breathing, being, and performing. Due to the increase in the volume of sound needed to fill a large concert hall, a flute soloist needs to take in more air. For this reason, soloist Susan Hoeppner comments about needing the “deepest breath” as well as “more breath control” when performing a concerto.⁸⁸ So, in the days preceding a performance, an artist may “concentrate on breathing and support [while] integrating the music”⁸⁹ in order to be ready for the elevated physical exertion. Preparing the body for the increase of air allows the soloist to respond and “project more if the orchestra is covering”⁹⁰ the soloist at any point during performance. A deep breath, as noted in Kenny Werner's *Effortless Mastery*, can also override fears and nurture a sense of commitment and confidence in experiencing a “tone [with power], dexterity, and energy.”⁹¹

Rather than indicating any modification in performance, half of the 37% of soloists in this category (or 7 of 14) describe states of being that occur in performance.

⁸⁸ Susan Hoeppner, Telephone Interview.

⁸⁹ Marie-Hélène Breault, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

⁹⁰ Katherine Kemler, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

⁹¹ Kenny Werner, *Effortless Mastery: Liberating the Master Musician Within* (New Albany: Jamey Aebersold Jazz, Inc., 1996), pp. 39-40.

Here are some of these artists' comments: "Convey and bring to life a piece in the most honest way possible,"⁹² "be yourself and love the audience,"⁹³ "forget the technique as much as possible and play,"⁹⁴ "feel comfortable,"⁹⁵ and "enjoy the experience."⁹⁶ These comments, offered in response to concerto performances, can equally apply to other performance scenarios, such as solo recitals and chamber music. It is interesting to note from these comments that, despite the involvement of an increased number of musical forces as well as the equally isolating nature of a concerto performance, the performer, in a certain way, needs to maintain a similar state of being as that of other performance situations. As mentioned in the section on Memorization, some soloists choose not to perform from memory because of the high stakes involved in performing a concerto and the fear of a memory slip. Recognizing that there is a significant similarity between concerto performances and other performance situations may help decrease the fear associated with performing concerti as well as minimize the sense of something to lose, regardless of whether or not the soloist performs from memory. The states of being described in the aforementioned comments – if read with this in mind – hone in on honesty, love, play, feeling, and enjoyment.

Such comments suggest that when the moment of truth on stage arrives, the critical analysis involved in learning and preparing a work for performance yields to a frame of mind that trusts that those details will appear when needed. Living and being fully present in the moment becomes pivotally important to the performance. In his

⁹² Sharon Bezaly, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

⁹³ Jean Ferrandis, Telephone Interview.

⁹⁴ Gary Schocker, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

⁹⁵ David Shostac, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

⁹⁶ Jim Walker, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

book, *The Inner Game of Music*, author and bassist Barry Green explains, “letting go of our conscious control of what is going on...gives our music spontaneity and power.”⁹⁷ During performance, instead of overwhelming the mind with modifications that require critical thinking, these artists immerse themselves completely in the moment, share the music with the audience, and use the power of the moment to communicate more optimally.

Finally, two artists allude to a synthesis that potentially exists between practice, projection, communication, and performance. International soloist Michael Faust explains that the reason he does not modify anything in performance is due to the fact that he practices as if he were already on stage.⁹⁸ Another international soloist, Wissam Boustany, says that “the concepts of communication and projection are pretty constant”⁹⁹ for him, being steadily contemplated throughout practice and performance. From these statements, distinctions made between practice and performance, or projection and communication become blurred, or perhaps thoroughly interconnected. By building the final performance through the incipient musical efforts emerging in the practice room – with constant vigilance to the aim of projecting the music and communicating with the audience – the artist ties many aspects of the performance together well in advance, and in this way, also conceivably optimizes performances. Yet, just as the type of sound used may depend on the reactions of the hall, the artist’s communication of the music may spontaneously change in response to a particular audience. The deeper and more comprehensive the preparation of the artist, the more authentic these responses may be.

⁹⁷ Barry Green with W. Tim Gallwey, *The Inner Game of Music* (New York: Doubleday, 1986), p. 90.

⁹⁸ Michael Faust, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

⁹⁹ Wissam Boustany, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

Discussion of projection results

To project their presence, sound and music beyond the stage and to the audience, flute soloists consider several options. For 58% of the surveyed flutists, the employment of physical and perceptual modifications include changes involving posture, gaze, gesture, sound quality, and volume. Conversely, for 37% of the 38 flutists surveyed, awareness of breathing and state of being, as well as the complete presence in the moment of performance carry more importance than any particular physical modifications. While at first indicating a distinct division in the attitude of the respondents, these results may actually reflect each performer's level of conscious awareness and memory recollection.

The following quotation examining the experience of “flow” may help clarify reasons for this roughly 60/40 percent split between implementing physical modifications and not consciously implementing them at all:

The experience of flow (Csikszentmihalyi 1990) can be characterized as an experience in which the subject's skills are fully preoccupied with a task. For example, in playing music, you are likely to be in flow when you are fully occupied with music playing rather than with the instrument on which you play, the environment, or yourself. To obtain flow, there should be a balance between skills and challenges, as the task may become boring if challenges are too small, or frustrating if they are too great, in relation to the skills of the subject.¹⁰⁰

In order to experience ‘flow’ or to be fully occupied in the music being played, the artist must, to a certain degree, ‘abandon’ or ‘release from’ the external environment, the instrument and from the self. Live musical performances, however, can involve unexpected factors over which the artist may have little or no control. For example, if a

¹⁰⁰ *Musical Gestures: Sound, Movement, and Meaning*, ed. Rolf Inge Godøy and Marc Leman (New York: Routledge, 2010), p. 139.

misalignment or balance issue were to occur between the music of the orchestra and that of the soloist, the soloist might either react unconsciously and instinctively, or call upon a more conscious approach in order to realign or balance musically with the orchestra (as it might be easier for the soloist, rather than for the orchestra, to make the adjustment at that moment). However, if the music between soloist and orchestra is already aligned and balanced, the soloist may feel at liberty to release from conscious adjustments and become more immersed with the music itself. Challenges or opportunities that arise in the environment or with an aspect of the music at a certain moment in a particular concert may require the performer to call upon skills in a conscious way or free the performer from conscious control of the instrument and the self. The ability to immediately assess the situation and alternate between making modifications or living the moment is an essential skill for optimizing communication and directing the concert toward the ideal of sharing the music.

“Molding a performance” (through adjustments of the body or senses) and “being a performance” (through immersion in the moment) suggest that performers have access to a broad range of tools to enhance communication during a performance. As noted in Jon Gorrie’s book, *Performing in the Zone*, “concentrating on finding solutions to achieving an ideal level of performance...and becoming open to new possibilities and ideas to help...improve the state of mind in performing situations, can [lead to the] goal of optimal performance.”¹⁰¹ The decision to clarify the sound toward the uppermost balcony of a large concert hall, for example, can potentially have as positive an effect on the audience as the quality of focused attention the artist gives to a musical passage.

¹⁰¹ Jon Gorrie, *Performing in the Zone* (Jon Gorrie: 2009) or [n.p.: 2009], p. 170.

Therefore, whether the solutions these artists' find direct them toward physical modifications, or toward heightened awareness of the present moment (thus releasing physical modifications from conscious control), the focus is always on optimizing performances. Determining precise occurrences of soloists' instantaneous ventures between unconscious and conscious awareness throughout the moment of performance would require further study beyond the scope of this paper.

CHAPTER 6

IMPORTANT PARAMETERS CHART AND ANALYSIS

“On a scale of 1-5, 5 being most important, and 1 being not very important, please indicate the relative importance of the following parameters in your own individual process for preparing, creating and projecting your interpretation for optimal performance....” (No. 5 from the Flute Soloist Questionnaire)

In the *Handbook of Music and Emotion: Theory, Research, Applications*, a mini-survey administered in 2009 to research authors revealed that one of the top three priorities for the study of music and emotion over the next five years involves

a focus on music experiences that do not clearly fall within the category of emotional responses [in the] sense that ‘emotion’ and ‘feeling’, as normally defined, do not capture everything relevant in our experiences of music...In addition to experienced emotions (feelings), there are ‘flow’ experiences, ‘spirituality’, ‘altered states’, ‘vitality affects’, ‘perceptual and cognitive’ aspects of music experience, as well as more complex ‘aesthetic experiences’.¹⁰²

Similarly noted by Barry Green, double bassist and author of three books on the ‘mind-body and spirit’ of performing musicians,

After many years of practicing and teaching...I discovered that there were elements of excellence that were not included in my Inner Game work...[such as] courage, confidence, passion, communication, joy, tolerance, creativity, humility and inspiration...it’s not just what we play or how well we play the music, but more importantly, what special qualities we bring to our performances that give us our uniqueness.¹⁰³

To further the discussion of current areas of interest in both the sciences and performing arts, the present study explores what flute soloists consider the most important parameters amidst the complex workings involved in optimizing performances and communication.

¹⁰² Patrik N. Juslin and John A. Sloboda, “The Past, Present, and Future of Music and Emotion Research,” in *Handbook of Music and Emotion: Theory, Research, Applications*, ed. by Patrik N. Juslin and John A. Sloboda (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), p. 938-940.

¹⁰³ Barry Green, *Bringing Music to Life* (foreword by Don Campbell), (Chicago: GIA Publications, Inc., 2009), p. 7.

These include not only obvious things like technical facility but more abstract concepts such as intuition, intention, and emotions.

Previously listed in Chapter 2 (on p. 10), the 14 parameters conceived by the author and presented in the Flute Soloist Questionnaire consist of broad terms, intentionally left open to interpretation. Since participating flutists represent multiple career levels, diverse cultural backgrounds and varied musical paths, I reasoned that providing specific definitions for these terms could limit this initial study. To simplify the list, the 14 parameters are generalized under the following categories:

MENTAL EXERCISE	ATTITUDE / STATE OF BEING	PHYSICAL REFERENCE	SPIRITUAL REFERENCE
Structure	Emotions/Feelings	Physical freedom	Spirit/Prayer/
Memory	Comfort with externals	Endurance/Exercise/	Meditation
Concentration/Intention	Confidence/Humility	Energy/Enthusiasm	
Understand intuitively	Commitment/Flow		
Creativity/Play	Belief/Trust/Love		
Find value in the work			

Mental Exercise

- **Structure** – Understanding the structure of the work, depending upon the type of music, requires a comprehension of significant harmonic, melodic and rhythmic elements, among other important details of overall formal design.
- **Memory** – Memorizing the work
- **Concentration/Intention** – Working on mental focus, concentration and intention, to thoroughly explore a particular element of practice or performance.
- **Understanding intuitively** – Understanding the work through intuition can reference an immediate understanding or execution of familiar musical patterns, or can, for example, refer to an innate sense of meaning permeating the shape of a musical line.
- **Creativity/Play** – Leaving room for spontaneous creativity and play can suggest a matter of degree regarding freedom from predetermined expectations or interpretations.

- Find value in work – Finding value and meaning in the composition invites the performer to acknowledge the artistic endeavor of the composer, or to search for and find, for example, technical, musical, personal, or philosophical connections to the work.

Attitude / State of being

- Emotion/Feelings – Uncovering an emotional journey or connecting with the work through feelings, which occurs on a visceral level
- Comfort with externals – Comfort level with the orchestra and the size of the hall deals with the ease a performer feels with the external performing environment.
- Confidence/Humility – The results of this study found problems with this pairing, which will be discussed later (p. 51). For now, the importance of finding a balance between humility and confidence can refer to the difference between humility and arrogance, confidence and arrogance, and insecurity and confidence. The dichotomy may also be read as finding a balance, for example, between the roles of ‘serving the music and audience’ versus ‘serving the self’.
- Commitment/Mastery/Flow – Achieving a level of mastery, complete commitment, and/or flow, concern the performer’s thoroughness in internalizing the physical and mental navigations through a musical work.
- Belief/Trust/Love – These can be considered working concepts, or can be experienced in relation to the music, the self, the audience, etc.

Physical reference

- Physical freedom – Incorporating techniques of physical freedom refer to the release of excess muscle tension prior to, during, and after practice or performance. While some artists mentioned specific techniques, such as Alexander Technique or yoga, simple stretches or releasing through simple awareness are also included in this reference.
- Endurance/Exerc/Energy/Enthus - or Endurance/Exercise/Energy/Enthusiasm, all involve expressions of various types of energy through the physical body

Spiritual reference

- Spirit/Meditation/Prayer – Connecting with spirit, more than just imagination, a spiritual connection could involve prayer, meditation, or a power that convinces of the truth, the essence of meaning.

A final category, indicated as “Other” allowed soloists to offer additional parameters.

The 8 other parameters either emphasized or supplemented by the artists themselves (and abbreviated in brackets), include the following: 1) wearing comfortable attire and shoes [sh/], 2) having high standards [hist], 3) making and being convinced by musically stylistic choices [sty], 4) ‘selling it’ (giving everything to the performance) [sel], 5) knowing the rhythmic structure of the score [r/st], 6) visualization [vis], 7) feeling and giving love [luv], and 8) creativity [crt].

The Important Parameters Chart is based on a 1 to 5 scale ranking system, in which 1 is “not very important” and 5 is “most important.” Out of 38 participants, 37 or 97% chose to answer this ranking question. While some of these flutists either decided on a narrow range of numeric values instead of a whole number, used numbers exceeding the given range, or expounded upon their ranking choice, only whole numbers up to 5 are used in the calculations for the chart analysis. For divided numbers, if both numbers were 3 or above, the higher rating was counted; for numbers 3 or below, the lower rating was counted. Split votes, such as 1/5, were not counted. For consistency, responses that specified only positive or negative inclinations about a parameter, without providing a numerical value, are also excluded from the calculations.

KEY 1 = not very important, 5 = most important Bold = parameter placed 4 or 5 overall 5 = highest rank per individual <i>Italics</i> = lowest rank per individual ~ = explanation, question, no answer x = split rating (not counted)	Anderson, Claudia	Anton, Ulrike	Bezaly, Sharon	Boustany, Wissam	Boyd, Bonita	Breault, Marie-Helene	Buyse, Leone	Chatterton, Linda	Cumplido, Viviana	Dorough, Aralee	Faust, Michael	Ferrandis, Jean	Grim, Jennifer	Guzman, Viviana	Hoepfner, Susan	Jennings, Christina	Kemler, Katherine	Kuenzel, Adam	
Structure	5	5	5	3	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	4	4	
Emotion / Feelings	5	5	5	5	4	5	4	5	4	<i>1</i>	4	3	4	5	3	5	5	4	
Memory	2	5	2	5	4	x	<i>1</i>	5	2	5	3	<i>1</i>	3	5	5	4	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>	
Comfort with external environment (orch/hall)	4	4	5	2	5	~	4	2	3	3	3	5	4	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>	5	5	5	
Concentration / Focus / Intention	5	5	~	2	5	5	5	5	4	5	4	3	4	5	5	4	5	4	
Confidence / Humility (vs. Arrogance)	~	<i>1</i>	~	<i>1</i>	5	5	3	~	4	<i>1</i>	3	~	2	~	5	<i>1</i>	5	3	
Physical Freedom	5	5	~	3	4	5	2	~	3	5	4	2	2	5	5	4	4	2	
Spirit / Meditation / Prayer	~	<i>1</i>	~	<i>1</i>	5	x	3	5	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>	2	4	<i>1</i>	5	~	3	5	3	
Commitment / Mastery / Flow	5	5	5	3	5	5	5	5	4	3	~	<i>1</i>	4	5	5	5	5	3	
Spontaneous Creativity / Play	5	3	5	4	5	5	~	5	5	4	3	3	4	5	5	4	4	4	
Belief / Trust / Love	5	4	~	4	~	~	5	5	3	<i>1</i>	5	5	3	5	5	3	5	3	
Finding Value in work	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	3	<i>1</i>	5	5	4	5	4	5	5	5	
Understanding through Intuition	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	~	3	<i>1</i>	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	5	
Endurance / Exercise / Enthusiasm / Intensity	5	5	~	5	5	4	5	5	4	5	4	4	3	5	5	~	4	4	
Other								sh/		r/ st				cr t	hist		vis		

KEY 1 = not very important, 5 = most important Bold = parameter placed 4 or 5 overall 5 = highest rank per individual <i>Italics</i> = lowest rank per individual ~ = explanation, question, no answer x = split rating (not counted)	Lamb, Eric	Larson, Rhonda	Maurer, Laurel Ann	McGill, Demarre	Milliren, Greg	Nelson, Conor	Pallottelli, Sergio	Porter, Amy	(Ramirez, Catherine)	Ruhland, Tajana	Schocker, Gary	Shostac, David	Stillman, Mimi	Stolper, Mary	Thomason-Redus, Caen	Walker, Jim	Warren, Jessica	Wincenc, Carol	Zucker, Laurel
Structure	5	5	5	4	4	3	5	5	4	5	5	~	5	5	5	4	3	5	5
Emotion / Feelings	3	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	~	5	4	3	4	5	5	5
Memory	4	4	3	3	3	5	3	4	3	4	5	5	5	3	3	5	<i>1</i>	2	0
Comfort with external environment (orch/hall)	4	<i>1</i>	5	2	5	3	4	5	3	4	5	5	5	4	3	2	4	5	3
Concentration / Focus / Intention	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	4	4	5	5
Confidence / Humility (vs. Arrogance)	5	0	4	5	3	5	4	~	5	5	3	5	~	2	2	4	<i>1</i>	5	0
Physical Freedom	4	5	5	3	3	3	3	5	4	3	5	~	5	3	4	2	5	5	5
Spirit / Meditation / Prayer	<i>1</i>	5	5	<i>1</i>	3	3	5	5	5	3	5	5	~	3	3	5	4	5	0
Commitment / Mastery / Flow	4	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	5
Spontaneous Creativity / Play	3	5	2	2	3	5	5	<i>1</i>	3	5	5	5	5	5	4	3	3	5	5
Belief / Trust / Love	3	5	5	5	2	3	5	5	5	4	5	5	~	5	4	5	5	5	5
Finding Value in work	4	5	5	5	4	4	3	5	4	5	5	5	5	4	4	2	5	5	5
Understanding through Intuition	2	~	2	4	3	5	4	4	5	4	5	5	5	2	4	3	3	5	5
Endurance / Exercise / Enthusiasm / Intensity	3	5	5	5	5	3	4	5	5	5	2	4	5	5	3	3	3	5	5
Other					sty							luv		sel					

IMPORTANT PARAMETERS CHART ANALYSIS

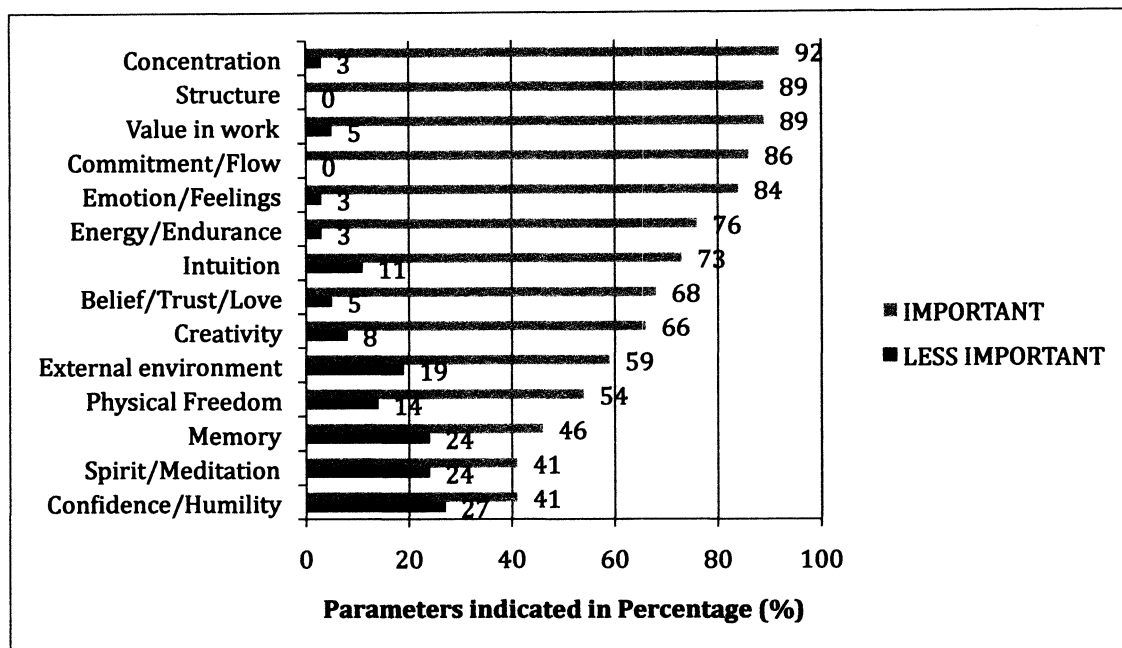
Overall ranking of parameters from the MOST IMPORTANT
(**Bold** in Chart, ratings of 4 or 5):

Concentration/Intention	34/37 or 92%
Structure	33/37 or 89%
Find value in work	33/37 or 89%
Commitment/Mastery/Flow	32/37 or 86%
Emotion/Feelings	31/37 or 84%
Endurance/Exerc/Energ/Enthus	28/37 or 76%
Understanding intuitively	27/37 or 73%
Belief/Trust/Love	25/37 or 68%
Creativity/Play	25/37 or 66%
Comfort with externals	22/37 or 59%
Physical Freedom	20/37 or 54%
Memory	17/37 or 46%
Spirit/Meditation/Prayer	15/37 or 41%
Confidence/Humility	15/37 or 41%

Overall ranking of parameters toward those marked LESS IMPORTANT
(Ratings of 2 and below):

Commitment/Mastery/Flow	0/37 or 0%
Structure	0/37 or 0%
Concentration/Intention	1/37 or 3%
Emotion/Feelings	1/37 or 3%
Endurance/Exerc/Energ/Enthus	1/37 or 3%
Belief/Trust/Love	2/37 or 5%
Find value in work	2/37 or 5%
Creativity/Play	3/37 or 8%
Understanding intuitively	4/37 or 11%
Physical Freedom	5/37 or 14%
Comfort with externals	7/37 or 19%
Spirit/Meditation/Prayer	9/37 or 24%
Memory	9/37 or 24%
Confidence/Humility	10/37 or 27%

LESS IMPORTANT		IMPORTANT	
Commitment/Mastery	0/37 or 0%	Concentration/Intention	34/37 or 92%
Structure	0/37 or 0%	Structure	33/37 or 89%
Concentration/Intention	1/37 or 3%	Find value in work	33/37 or 89%
Emotion/Feelings	1/37 or 3%	Commitment/Mastery	32/37 or 86%
Endurance/Exerc/Energy	1/37 or 3%	Emotion/Feelings	31/37 or 84%
Belief/Trust/Love	2/37 or 5%	Endurance/Exerc/Energy	28/37 or 76%
Find value in work	2/37 or 5%	Understanding intuitively	27/37 or 73%
Creativity/Play	3/37 or 8%	Belief/Trust/Love	25/37 or 68%
Understanding intuitively	4/37 or 11%	Creativity/Play	25/37 or 66%
Physical Freedom	5/37 or 14%	Comfort with externals	22/37 or 59%
Comfort with externals	7/37 or 19%	Physical Freedom	20/37 or 54%
Spirit/Meditation/Prayer	9/37 or 24%	Memory	17/37 or 46%
Memory	9/37 or 24%	Spirit/Meditation/Prayer	15/37 or 41%
Confidence/Humility	10/37 or 27%	Confidence/Humility	15/37 or 41%



The results show that for 92% of the participating flutists, optimal performance and communication depend most importantly upon the quality and level of concentration, mental focus and intention in preparing and projecting an interpretation. Acquiring an understanding of the structural workings in the music, as well as recognizing inherent value in the composition are also strong contributors (89%) to optimizing performances.

Also very important to the process of most flutists (84-86%) is connecting with the work through feelings, and achieving a level of mastery, complete commitment and flow in performing the music. Somewhat important to these artists' preparation and performance (54-76%) are issues of energy, intuition, belief/trust/love, creativity, the external environment, and physical freedom. To a lesser but still significant degree (41-46%), memorizing the music, practicing meditation or prayer (for the purpose of connecting to a more spiritual realm), and balancing confidence with humility characterize their process.

An analysis of the data into the aforementioned generalized categories (p. 43) reveals that optimal performances for these soloists tend to rely significantly (over 80%) upon Mental Exercises and Attitudes or States of Being.

Concentration/Intention	92%	MENTAL EXERCISE
Structure	89%	MENTAL EXERCISE
Find value in work	89%	MENTAL EXERCISE
Commitment/Mastery/Flow	86%	ATTITUDE / STATE OF BEING
Emotion/Feelings	84%	ATTITUDE / STATE OF BEING
Endurance/Exerc/Energ/Enthus	76%	PHYSICAL REFERENCE
Understanding intuitively	73%	MENTAL EXERCISE
Belief/Trust/Love	68%	ATTITUDE / STATE OF BEING
Creativity/Play	66%	MENTAL EXERCISE
Comfort with externals	59%	ATTITUDE / STATE OF BEING
Physical Freedom	54%	PHYSICAL REFERENCE
Memory	46%	MENTAL EXERCISE
Spirit/Meditation/Prayer	41%	SPIRITUAL REFERENCE
Confidence/Humility	41%	ATTITUDE / STATE OF BEING

More than 70% of participating flute soloists find parameters involving a Physical Reference valuable for effective performing. Less important – though far from inconsequential – parameters concerning a Spiritual Reference found relevance for 41% of respondents.

In retrospect, the intentionally vague wording of certain parts of the questionnaire may have led to skewed results. Answers from 11 soloists could not be factored into the Spirit/Meditation and Confidence/Humility categories; they essentially left these portions of the survey blank. Therefore, it is possible that this contributed to lower “Important” scores (41%) and higher “Less Important” scores (24-27%) for these categories. In the case of Confidence/Humility, more specific dichotomies – such as humility/arrogance, confidence/insecurity, or arrogance vs. confidence – could have drawn forth more useful information. The categories of Spirit/Meditation and Belief/Trust/Love could also have benefitted from more detailed explanation. It would be to the advantage of future researchers to refine these particular definitions in order to gather more complete data.

CHAPTER 7

ADVICE FOR OPTIMIZING PERFORMANCES AND COMMUNICATION

“What general advice can you offer to aid in optimizing musical communication as a soloist?” (No. 9 of Flute Soloist Questionnaire)

Most of the participating soloists (95%, or 36 of 38) chose to supply additional advice for enhancing communication during performances. While in some cases these artists emphasize the importance of ideas already mentioned, many of them offer further insight into the processes and challenges that performers face and overcome in order to musically and meaningfully communicate with audiences. Because their comments are so personal, and their own voices so expressive, these artists’ responses have been included without any editorial remarks. They are organized into five categories of general advice for optimizing performances and communication, with the following subheadings – Be Yourself, Music/Sound, Practice/Preparation, Relate to the Audience, and Become/Transcend:

1) Be Yourself

- “My advice would be to try to be emotionally strong, so that you can make every performance a personal experience. If you are open to your own emotions, then you will be able to communicate those feelings to the audience, and they will sense your personal involvement with the performance.”¹⁰⁴
- “Have integrity, be genuine and sincere [...]”¹⁰⁵
- “Look your best, (not just clothing), but look healthy, happy and strong.”¹⁰⁶
- “Be creative. Believe in yourself – in what you’re saying [...]”¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁴ Jennifer Grim, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

¹⁰⁵ Susan Hoeppner, Telephone Interview.

¹⁰⁶ Mary Stolper, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

¹⁰⁷ Viviana Guzman, Telephone Interview.

- “Be yourself, be open and try to appear comfortable with the setting. The audience wants you to succeed. Yes, even an NFA [National Flute Association] or similar group of flute-centric listeners.”¹⁰⁸
- “Be yourself! Audiences can sense when a performer is sincere, and on a mission to share the joy of a particular work and of orchestral collaboration. It’s not about you. It’s about the music!”¹⁰⁹
- “LOVE, be generous, sincere, honest. You cannot cheat – don’t cheat yourself in the way you prepare – it needs to be your best. Be very tough with yourself. Be very honest with yourself, so you can be [very honest] with others.”¹¹⁰
- “Be honest and sincere. Don’t try to impress, rather work as hard and as long as it takes to find your way to the center of the music. Be bold, take chances with your interpretation – you may be more open to criticism but it’s worth the commitment to say something original. This will happen on its own if you are open to your instincts and intuitions about the music.”¹¹¹

2) Music / Sound

- “I think having a clear musical game plan is the first step to giving a convincing performance. Once I know what I want to do and how I’m going to do it, then I feel I stand a better chance at being musically clear to my audience. I also think it’s important to exaggerate the phrasing, dynamics, and articulation to fill up the hall, however not too much that it becomes a caricature.”¹¹²
- “For a concerto – produce that largest sound with beauty. No forcing, but the sound must be big and captivating. Use the entire body in the tone production [and] be in good physical shape.”¹¹³
- “Play as beautifully as possible.”¹¹⁴
- “Colored palate. Inflected nuance. Dramatic contrast in colors – deep/light sound. Exaggerate dynamics.”¹¹⁵

¹⁰⁸ Jim Walker, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

¹⁰⁹ Leone Buyse, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

¹¹⁰ Jean Ferrandis, Telephone Interview.

¹¹¹ Claudia Anderson, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

¹¹² Viviana Cumplido, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

¹¹³ Laurel Ann Maurer, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

¹¹⁴ Sharon Bezaly, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

¹¹⁵ Carol Wincenc, Telephone Interview.

- “Practice. Believe in the music to the extent that you can. Acknowledge weaknesses. Keep it about the music, not a vehicle of the performer himself.”¹¹⁶
- “You have to know the score. You **MUST OWN** a copy of the full score. Amy Porter [suggests reading] the score like a book at night. One of my chamber coaches at MSM [Manhattan School of Music] said that he doesn’t feel comfortable with a concerto until he has performed it about 20 times. Figure out ways to keep it fresh and perform it in as many circumstances as possible.”¹¹⁷
- “Be honest to the music. The best musicians always lived for the music and let it speak through them. Be clear. Even on the emotional level. Find the meaning within the music, live with it – and you will be able to understand and to grow with the piece. Then you can even let the same concerto appear differently to you (and your audience) after a few years. Therefore we can keep musical life present because we respect and present its variety.”¹¹⁸
- “Ultimately, musical communication is about conveying the composer’s musical vision to the audience. Our role as performers is to present an accurate and convincing rendition of the work, and doing so in a way that draws people in. If you believe in the music, people will believe in it too.”¹¹⁹

3) Practice / Preparation

- “Preparation is in my opinion the best thing that one can do to ensure a comfortable, meaningful and communicative experience as a performer. The more comfortable one is as a performer with the text, the better the chances of being able to let go and communicate deeply and to connect with both the music and the audience.”¹²⁰
- “Make sure that all the components of performing are supporting your musical ideas. Articulation, volume, tone color, vibrato, pacing, body language, and breathing all have to work together to make a cohesive and coherent musical statement. If any of these is incongruous with the musical intent, or if we allow ourselves to feel the music more than express it, we lose a bit of the communication that is our goal. When everything works together, our performance appears effortless and most listeners have an emotional experience rather than just hearing music. When you reach people on an emotional level, it doesn’t matter what music you are playing.”¹²¹

¹¹⁶ Adam Kuenzel, Personal Interview.

¹¹⁷ Conor Nelson, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

¹¹⁸ Tatjana Ruhland, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

¹¹⁹ Mimi Stillman, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

¹²⁰ Eric Lamb, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

¹²¹ Caen Thomason-Redus, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

- “Record yourself always (scales, warm-up, tone) [...] ‘Can’t record yourself enough’ in order to have some idea of how you sound...to know that even [your] worst playing can have an impact.”¹²²

4) Relate to the Audience

- “Know the pieces so well that you can watch and look at the audience. Show that you have the piece and the music so much in yourself that you would not need to stare at the music, even when it is standing in front of you: look above the stand and try to involve the audience!”¹²³
- “Relax, smile inside and out, always project out to the audience as you perform.”¹²⁴
- “Smile, make eye contact (closed eyes are ok too) versus ‘deer in the headlights.’ [Just] don’t block out the audience.”¹²⁵
- “Don’t be afraid of or ignore your audience. They want to like you. They want to be entertained. Share your joy with them.”¹²⁶
- “I think it is important to have an exclusive awareness of the audience, to be in communication and reactive with the conductor (and orchestra), pianist, or other collaborators.”¹²⁷
- “Don’t second guess. Play as if no one was listening or watching. Do what you think. Do what you feel. Do what you set out to do. Don’t act. Be yourself. This will result in you being comfortable and ‘conversing’ with the audience in the best way. Make eye contact, even if just with one person! It brings everything into the perspective of humanity and you realize that you are happy and that you are making someone else happy as well, even for just an evening.”¹²⁸
- “You can improve the aural and the visual on so many levels, and technology has the ability to enhance what can be done. I think simply SPEAKING to one’s audience is the most helpful element of all, with or without a microphone.”¹²⁹
- “[Enhance performances with] video and audio technology.”¹³⁰

¹²² Demarre McGill, Telephone Interview.

¹²³ Michael Faust, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

¹²⁴ Laurel Zucker, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

¹²⁵ Linda Chatterton, Personal Interview.

¹²⁶ Jessica Warren-Acosta, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

¹²⁷ Katherine Kemler, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

¹²⁸ Sergio Pallottelli, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

¹²⁹ Rhonda Larson, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

¹³⁰ Amy Porter, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

• “Speaking is a huge part. I’ve only ever spoken in the pre-concert lecture style before a concerto.”¹³¹

• “Talk with the audience (especially for unfamiliar music) to help them understand and make an emotional connection. Break down the formal barrier. Explain what devices are used in the piece (ex. multiphonics); if there are lots of silences, show them how the piece ends. It’s ‘teamwork.’ Your presence needs to ‘draw others in’ not ‘push them away.’”¹³²

5) Become / Transcend

• “Question the conventions of the concert form and propose alternative solutions.”¹³³

• “I am particularly focused on two things: 1) controlling physical movement: the simpler, the better. I look for an economy that facilitates power, subtlety and accuracy; 2) the eyes – I find that the eyes are the window into the soul...I use my eyes to receive valuable information for what is happening around me...and they also reveal the inner world that I am trying to share. The eyes need to be on fire, need to be in the energy.”¹³⁴

• “You have to become what you are doing.”¹³⁵

• “You need to imagine as much as possible, that you are an actor playing a role, and that your character is telling a story. Your voice is your instrument, but the mindset must be the same as that of any actor in a play trying to convince the audience that they are THAT character.”¹³⁶

• “It’s like being an actor on stage; sometimes one must do a little more than he or she might think is necessary. Don’t be a statue, but don’t overdo to the point of being a distraction and getting in the way. Show patterns, new ideas, dynamic changes, articulations, moods, sequences, form, phrase shapes, etc., by being in sync with the music both internally and externally. Help the audience feel what you are feeling by your physical presence as well as by beauty of tone and technique.”¹³⁷

• “Discover the intention of the music (whether it’s emotional or abstract) and join yourself to it/open/coax/practice/refine that intention intensively. Doing so helps facilitate joining with the Spirit in which the work was potentially composed (even if I surmise this view) and will help the performer commit to re-creating the ‘music behind the sound’ in performance.”¹³⁸

¹³¹ Christina Jennings, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

¹³² Adam Kuenzel, Personal Interview.

¹³³ Marie-Hélène Breault, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

¹³⁴ Wissam Boustany, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

¹³⁵ Gary Schocker, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

¹³⁶ Greg Milliren, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

¹³⁷ David Shostac, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

¹³⁸ Catherine Ramirez (document author), Questionnaire.

- “To know the music as well as possible (including memorizing, if possible, so it becomes part of your soul), to perform it many times so your confidence builds, to often sing parts of the piece without the flute to discover your true musical and artistic ideas, and then to trust (for me) God to help me do my best for reasons beyond my personal gratification. (Such as His glory and other peoples’ enjoyment.)”¹³⁹

PART II

WHAT SOLOISTS EXPERIENCE AS OPTIMAL COMMUNICATION (Nos. 6, 7 and 8 of Flute Soloist Questionnaire)

In the exploration of what successful soloists do to communicate with the audience, the need to define the essence of communication emerges very quickly. An extensive philosophical discussion about “meaning” is beyond the scope of this paper. Yet the intimate relationship between meaning and communication can be explained as follows: “Purpose and meaning are inseparable.... In older theories of meaning, something has meaning when it somehow represents our experience of the world or of ourselves.... Meaning would seem to be foremostly about communication.”¹⁴⁰ Hence, the experience of communication has as many subjective definitions as there are individuals.

In performance, the “message” to be communicated can arise from the music, the performer, the composer, the audience, the environment, unrelated or external events, something completely unconscious, or may not even exist at all. An important consideration to help clarify a position of understanding among potentially widely divergent perspectives can be found in the book *Music Cognition*:

¹³⁹ Bonita Boyd, soloist, former principal flutist of the Rochester Philharmonic, and flute professor at the Eastman School of Music, Emailed Questionnaire Response, June 19, 2011.

¹⁴⁰ Robert Jourdain, *Music, The Brain, and Ecstasy*, p. 272.

The effort to achieve too precise a conceptual determination of musical meaning runs the risk of missing the point entirely.... 'It is exactly the *meaning* that when explicated in words gets lost among the verbal significations—too precise and too literal—and gets betrayed.... Music doesn't *signify*, it *suggests*; that is, it creates forces in the imagination that stimulate and orient verbal associations' (Imberty, 1975, p. 91).¹⁴¹

One intention of the present study is to formally recognize the individual perspectives of these 38 flute soloists by making available (in particular, to flutists, other musicians, and interdisciplinary researchers) their personal descriptions (or *suggestions*) concerning the most meaningful connections experienced between themselves and the audience. The hope is that discussions about optimal performance and communication, from the performer's perspective, can ultimately benefit others in practical and tangible ways by influencing present directions of inquiry and analysis of interdisciplinary fields involving musicians, such as education, neuroscience, and psychology.

The following three chapters concern soloists' experiences of optimal musical communication, and address the following questions: What is meaningful to a performer? When touched by a meaningful moment, what does that 'connection' feel like? How do performers know when they have *not* connected or communicated with the audience? How can a performer make meaningful moments happen?

¹⁴¹ W. Jay Dowling and Dane L. Harwood, *Music Cognition* (Orlando: Academic Press, Inc., Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Publishers, 1986), p. 207.

CHAPTER 8

CONNECTION

“From your perspective, please describe an instance in which you felt a palpable connection between yourself and the audience while performing. Would you describe this event as ‘meaningful’ or ‘successful’ musical communication?”

(No. 7 from Flute Soloist Questionnaire)

This section summarizes the personal accounts of what 36 soloists (or 95%) experience as meaningful moments during musical performance. The quotations, a complete list of which may be found in the Appendix (p. 90), are roughly divided into three groups: the first 20 accounts (or 56% of 36 responses) provide great detail about the performer/audience connection; the second group of 7 quotes (or 19% of 36) are of soloists who almost always experience a palpable connection with the audience, and the third group of 9 quotes (or 25%) discusses connections between the performer and audience covering a broad range of topics.

The first group generally describes the interpersonal “connection” between the artist and the audience using some of the following terms: an invisible relationship, strong tie, connection of energy, reaching out, drawing in, active listening and interest, feeling of breathing together, inspiring the artist to give more. Links to how well the artist knew the music are also noted (ownership of the music, feeling confident). Others highlight the balance between two forces at play (being involved in the music/being aware of the audience, expectations/surprise, preparation/opportunity). Time and the senses are also important (time stands still, sense of awe, intuition, seeing/looking at the audience). Some describe the interior world (going into their own world, going deeper, exposing vulnerability), while others describe the exterior world (feeling the silence, the quality of the applause, talking with audience members, feeling a magical atmosphere or

energy, the significant emotional impact of world events, and playing beyond the self into a spiritual realm).

Below are 5 abbreviated accounts that highlight some of the topics mentioned.

Emphasis has been added in **bold**. Numbers with parentheses correspond to the order of these quotes as listed in the Appendix.

Exterior world / Spiritual realm -

11) “In a ‘high pressure’ solo recital in New York City, I felt as though I **played ‘beyond myself’**, a feeling I would attribute to performing in a spiritual realm (Christians call it ‘playing in the Spirit’). The audience reaction was also extraordinary. I felt as though I had played the recital for the glory of the Lord instead of for myself.”¹⁴²

Time -

5) “In my experience, the most successful or meaningful times have been cloudy in my memory. I believe heavily in the idea of Zen and reaching a point **where time stands still and often in these cases, one has a bit of memory loss**. One touches something so deep, so personal inside of oneself that you forget the small details of the experience.”¹⁴³

Interior world -

14) “I remember [specific] moments in the music where I felt deep connections with the audience... [for example] Toru Takemitsu’s *Air* – at my New York recital debut – I risked going for a much softer dynamic on a particular interval and the poignancy of the piece and the connection I felt with the audience became so immediate [...]. **I risked going deeper, exposing more of myself and my vulnerability.**”¹⁴⁴

Balance between two forces at play -

2) “Taos, New Mexico, I was doing [J.S. Bach’s] *Brandenburg Concerto No. 2*. It felt like it transcended everyone on the stage...and I’m pretty confident that the audience felt that... it was special. So special, in fact, that I spent a lot of time asking why I don’t have more of those experiences. [Another experience like it] happened seven years before. [It’s when there’s] **a perfect balance between being totally involved in every way in the performance, with an awareness that people are reacting to it in a positive, almost intense way...** Is this meaningful or successful musical communication – yes, absolutely. There is such **ultimate interaction** when you’re feeling something so powerful from the **audience that’s inspiring you to give even more...** **It boils down to preparation and opportunity to perform.**”¹⁴⁵

¹⁴² Bonita Boyd, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

¹⁴³ Eric Lamb, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

¹⁴⁴ Catherine Ramirez (document author), Questionnaire.

¹⁴⁵ Demarre McGill, Telephone Interview.

Exterior world / Impact of world events -

20) “National Flute Association’s 25th Anniversary [1997 Convention] in Chicago, performing the Christopher Rouse *Concerto* with Ransom Wilson conducting – people STILL come up to me and say ‘oh my God, we’ll never forget it’...people were weeping – what they had done at that Convention was that at intermission they had done a **tribute to the PanAm flight** (that blew up with kids on board, it was terrible) – people STILL talk about it...it’s like the kind of thing where you remember where you were standing when [John F.] Kennedy was shot or when 9/11 happened...it had that much impact... There are many moments...**playing for people who passed away**...the premiere of the Rouse in Finland, where audiences are very contained emotionally...that one, they gave a standing ovation... In the slow movement of the Lucas Foss *Renaissance Concerto*, it’s so celestial...[intuitively] **you can just tell when the audience is raptured.**”¹⁴⁶

The second group (of 7 or 19%) is of soloists who specified that they usually, often, or almost always experience a palpable connection with the audience. These artists characterize such connections in more general or succinct terms, and credit the power of music to help create a connection with the audience, even when the artist does not feel it. These points, highlighted in the 2 following quotes, are emphasized in **bold**.

Usually feels connected -

4) “The connection with the audience is an **integral part of each and every performance.**”¹⁴⁷

Power of music -

7) “I would have to say that I experience this in nearly every performance. It is why I love to perform [...]. I have even had times when I’ve had to perform **when I was very ‘ill’**, but no one knew. **It was a ‘no connection’ feeling from my perspective, but the audience loved it**---again, this is the **power of the music**, not the feelings of the performer.”¹⁴⁸

The third group (of 9 or 25%) regards connections between the performer and audience covering a broad range of topics. These accounts include comments about connections *not* felt by the artist (due to illness) yet felt by the audience. Other

¹⁴⁶ Carol Wincenc, Telephone Interview.

¹⁴⁷ Sharon Bezaly, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

¹⁴⁸ Rhonda Larson, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

descriptions mention connections that result from preferences or allowances made by the audience. Additional considerations raised by speaking to the audience are discussed, as well as connections resulting from a heightened sense of accomplishment. Below are 2 quotations emphasizing these topics:

Connections made despite illness -

1) “I had been ill, had taken some nasal medication [...] and was terribly dry for the concert. This made me feel like it was affecting my sound and I was terribly distracted and **did not feel like I was connecting with the audience at all** due to this distraction. However, after a movement of the Gieseking *Sonatine*, I heard a sigh of pleasure from someone in the audience. [A]nd then I calmed down a bit and my mouth was less dry, I felt better and the **concert was a big success with a lot of positive feedback from many people**. So, after this experience I have concluded that it is not always necessary to think about communicating with the audience, **sometimes it just happens** for some unexplained reason.”¹⁴⁹

Talking with the audience -

6) “Very modern work – *Eloquentia* by Manuel Sosa... I thought the audience wasn’t going to understand what I was doing because it was 98% extended techniques... I’d need to demonstrate all these things before the performance...for this piece **talking was indispensable**...audiences want to have a connection...if they don’t understand the music, they can’t connect with it emotionally [...]. So I think I was making an **emotional connection during the talk**...also **breaking down this formal barrier** that seems to be part and parcel of a concerto performance. One of the best moments was when I was trying to demonstrate a multiphonic, and it wouldn’t come out and I said ‘oh well, practice time is over’ and the audience just cracked up! It’s a work in progress...you have this connection...here’s a human being playing the flute the best he can.”¹⁵⁰

In her book *The Power of Music: Pioneering Discoveries in the New Science of Song*, Ellen Mannes discusses experiments by neuroscientists that indicate that “performers’ brains [go] into a kind of trance... [and] that performing musicians don’t experience emotion in the same way as their audience.”¹⁵¹ However, this subjective survey reveals that performers can experience much more than a trance-like state.

¹⁴⁹ Katherine Kemler, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

¹⁵⁰ Adam Kuenzel, Personal Interview.

¹⁵¹ Elena Mannes, *The Power of Music: Pioneering Discoveries in the New Science of Song* (New York: Walker Publishing Company, 2011), p. 65-66.

Clearly, the respondents were usually aware of various kinds of emotions and sensations while performing, and further characterized these experiences as special connections to the audience. Whether or not these performers' emotions were exactly congruent with those of their audiences is somewhat irrelevant for the immeasurable level of subjectivity involved, as well as for the fact that emotions were nevertheless often being communicated between soloist and audience. As noted earlier (p. 57), meaningful communication has as many subjective definitions as there are individuals. Since many performances that were acknowledged by performers as meaningful and successful (as gathered from their own perspective and emotional feedback) often equally aligned with explicit responses from the audience (sighing, crying, positive feedback, standing ovation), the results of this study provide evidence supporting the idea that performers are not automatons when they play. They feel, respond, adjust, and concentrate all at the same time, for the purpose of communicating the music with the audience. So rather than discounting advances in neuroscience, the present study asserts that the variety of responses regarding meaningful connections experienced by performers warrants further examination.

CHAPTER 9

DISCONNECTION

“How do you know when, or feel as though, you have not communicated your message to an audience?” (No. 6 from Flute Soloist Questionnaire)

Out of 38 total participants, 35 soloists (or 92%) submitted responses for this question. Most of these descriptions reveal sensations, experiences and signals notifying an artist when the music has *not* been communicated. Responses are divided into the following 3 groups: 1) indications received from the audience (for 19 or 54% or respondents); 2) indications received from the artists themselves (9 or 26%); and 3) a smaller number (7 or 20%) for whom this question was irrelevant, as these artists rarely experience disconnection in performance.

In general, indications from the audience include the quality of the audience’s attention, silence and applause throughout the concert. Verbal confirmations (or lack of verbal feedback) from the public also inform the artist about the effectiveness of a performance. Performers can feel palpable negative sensations from an audience as well. Complete soloist quotations for this chapter can be found in the Appendix (p. 98).

Below are 5 quotation highlights:

Quality of audience reactions -

8) “One just **feels when the audience is not listening** and just waits for the buffet afterwards. Audiences tend to get a little ‘noisy’ when that happens and **look bored**.”¹⁵²

15) “When the **audience is unconcentrated, coughing or moving a lot**. And of course the **applause at the end** is a good indicator.”¹⁵³

10) “**Lack of applause and few visitors afterwards**.”¹⁵⁴

¹⁵² Ulrike Anton, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

¹⁵³ Michael Faust, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

¹⁵⁴ Jim Walker, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

19) “Maybe the friendly **applauding rituals** of our classical concert audience will **never really let us know?**”¹⁵⁵

Negative feelings from audience -

11) “There can be a **palpable feeling of something negative coming from the audience [reluctance to be there].**”¹⁵⁶

Indicators concerning a lack of communication can be acknowledged by artists themselves in a variety of ways. As explained in Chapter 3 (p. 21), a high standard of criticism helps artists work toward an ideal musical interpretation. These musicians spend significant amounts of time noticing, analyzing and refining minute details, no matter how trivial those details may appear, so as to improve their overall performance of the music. However, when these artists witness even the smallest error made, they may often become their own worst critics. When performers feel unprepared, distracted by other concerns, or dissatisfied with their performance, they often self-reflect upon their lack of concentration as being synonymous with a lack of communication. Some artists also associate physical manifestations of excess tension with an inability to optimally communicate. Of the 9 complete accounts (or 26% of responses), a sample of 3 quotations are listed here:

Lack of preparation -

3) “If I am **nervous**, know that I am **not truly prepared**, or if there is **no ‘two way’ communication** with the audience.”¹⁵⁷

Dissatisfaction with performance -

5) “Actually, I have come to understand that **I do not always know**, especially if I am in discomfort of some sort when I perform. Many times I do know and it **usually has to do with my not being able to do what I wanted with the music.**”¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁵ Tatjana Ruhland, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

¹⁵⁶ Katherine Kemler, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

¹⁵⁷ Sergio Pallottelli, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

¹⁵⁸ Claudia Anderson, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

Excess physical tension -

- 6) “Usually I feel wooden and **not able to connect with myself or the audience**. The feeling is often accompanied by **physical tension**.”¹⁵⁹

For the final group of 7 responses (or 20%), a lack of communication with an audience was simply irrelevant, as these soloists rarely experience disconnection in performance. Artists’ perceptions of audience reactions are mentioned as well. These artists also acknowledge a lack of control over the feelings of the audience and focus mainly on their own feelings during performance. A sample of 2 quotes from this group follows:

Feelings of disconnection not applicable -

- 4) “I **usually do [have a connection]**.”¹⁶⁰

Perceptions -

- 5) “There could be a world between what we felt during a performance and what the public felt. So having or not having communicated my message to the audience is not measurable. It is a **question of perception**, and perception implies subjectivity.”¹⁶¹

The focus of an artist’s attention during performance can effect how that artist interprets feelings of disconnection. From the responses given, it is clear that the performer can rely on information gathered either from external sources, such as the audience, or from internal sources, namely, the self. Degrees of satisfaction with the performance itself, the comfort level of the performer, and even with the audience’s level of focus can all play a part in determining how a musician reflects on the success or effectiveness of a performance. Conclusions drawn here about how distractions or lack of attention increase the possibility of disconnection with an audience may help reveal

¹⁵⁹ Wissam Boustany, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

¹⁶⁰ Viviana Guzman, Telephone Interview.

¹⁶¹ Marie-Hélène Breault, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

why artists give such importance to concentration as indicated in the Important Parameters Analysis (pp. 48-49).

CHAPTER 10

CULTIVATING CONNECTION

“In your most engaging moments performing a concerto, was there anything in your preparation (or performance) that helped this moment to occur?”
(No. 8 from Flute Soloist Questionnaire)

Can a performer ensure that moments of connection and communication occur?

The *Top Twelve Practices for Persuasive Performing* described in Chapter 3 and the *Five Categories of General Advice* for optimizing performances and communication in Chapter 7 provide strategies that benefit both preparation and performance. This section highlights three areas of emphasis that 30 of the 38 flute soloists (or 79%) cultivate in order to connect with an audience.

In general, responses to this question can be grouped into the following areas: 1) Personal well-being/Interpersonal collaboration; 2) Preparation/Practice; and 3) Sharpen skills/Live the moment. Complete quotations are found in the Appendix (p. 102). Six abbreviated excerpts from the areas mentioned are listed below with emphasis added in **bold**.

Interpersonal collaboration -

2) “As an American Jew whose ancestors came from Russia and Poland, I felt a **profound connection to the composer and the piece** [David Finko’s *Concerto for Piccolo and Orchestra*], which reflects on his own life story as a Russian Jew and on the trials of the Jewish people in the Holocaust and living under the oppressive Soviet regime. **My own family history gave me a personal insight into the music. Working with a composer** provides an opportunity to hear about his or her vision directly, but...

because of the history and collective memory I shared with the composer, it made the experience particularly moving.”¹⁶²

Well-being -

3) “Yes, [particularly a state of] **mental serenity and well-being**. Feeling a **great vibe from a full hall, having had a great night’s sleep and being in the company of great colleagues and friends** to set the whole thing up!”¹⁶³

Preparation -

1) “**The better the preparation (generally time invested), the better the engagement is likely to occur**”¹⁶⁴

Practice -

15) “As I’ve mentioned already, I think that **practicing the music while in the mindset of communicating with your audience in an emotional way** helps immensely...Making **practicing fundamentals** a regular part of my practice routine (practicing tone, vibrato, dynamics, etc, outside the context of music) helps immensely.”¹⁶⁵

Sharpen skills -

1) “**Be very tough when you work, never satisfied. Always base your work on the music, the clarity of ideas.**”¹⁶⁶

Live the moment -

10) “**You must always leave room for things you cannot control to happen. You must leave room in your mind and heart that these things do not [necessarily] ruin a performance.**”¹⁶⁷

Cultivating connections with audiences incorporates a comprehensive approach to learning and presenting a musical work. Beyond the processes involved in mastering the music are processes involved in mastering performance, working relationships, taking care of and being honest with oneself, and learning to accept and live in the moment. As discussed throughout this document, optimizing performances is no casual endeavor.

¹⁶² Mimi Stillman, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

¹⁶³ Sergio Pallottelli, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

¹⁶⁴ Jim Walker, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

¹⁶⁵ Greg Milliren, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

¹⁶⁶ Jean Ferrandis, Telephone Interview.

¹⁶⁷ Mary Stolper, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

Emphasis on the areas needed to cultivate and nurture effective communication confirms that a performer's commitment to the audience and to the music needs to be as complete as possible for optimal results.

PART III

SOLOIST – COMPOSER – MUSIC CONNECTIONS

(Nos. 12 to 15 from Flute Soloist Questionnaire)

As stated earlier (Chapter 3, p. 24), according to the persuasive performance data, artists “seek more than just a surface level of understanding. They want to and need to, in a way, *become* the work in order to persuasively perform” the work. In ‘becoming’ a work, however, whose ideas do performers express? Is the performer’s main focus, as inquired in #12 from Flute Soloist Questionnaire, “to realize the composer’s intentions, [the performer’s] own, a combination of the two, or something else?” The results from this survey question clarify the position of the performer with regard to the composer.

Of the flute soloists who answered this question, 63% (or 10 of 16) support the idea that, at some point, in realizing a work, the artist combines both the composer’s intentions and their own. For me, the first place I start is to find out the composer’s intention – Why was it written? What did they want to say? I think my interpretation emerges from the process of relating my own life experience to what the composer is going for, or what I think he/she is going for. Ultimately it becomes a new creation made by the composer and myself.¹⁶⁸ Sometimes, this creation involves differing degrees of interpretation. Soloist Jennifer Grim explains, “Recent compositions are highly detailed with expressive [and] dynamic markings, which do not leave much to the interpreter [...]. I feel that it is my duty to play what is indicated on the score.”¹⁶⁹ Composers, however, like flutist-composer Rhonda Larson, “don’t always know what their piece of music ‘can

¹⁶⁸ Catherine Ramirez (document author), Questionnaire.

¹⁶⁹ Jennifer Grim, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

do;’ so it is up to the performer to find this [out].”¹⁷⁰ The realization of a work (by a living composer, in particular) can be seen as a collaborative, creative process. In her experience, Jessica Warren-Acosta has “found that composers are wonderfully open to adding to a newer score,”¹⁷¹ about which they may not know everything in advance, as composers may explore and re-organize their concepts of a new musical work as they evolve through collaboration. Whether or not the artist has access and opportunity to collaborate directly with a composer, the performer can find a balance between personal expressive intentions and those in the music. “The performer, if they are smart, does find the balance, does find a way to be both things at the same time, [...] not just one or the other alternating throughout the piece. [It’s] too easy to do that; it’s much harder to be a [combination].”¹⁷²

Since the collaboration between composer and performer can play a significant role (whether it happens in person, or through the music itself), the following section presents a brief discussion about this relationship, using the Christopher Rouse *Flute Concerto* from the perspective of renowned flute soloist Carol Wincenc, for whom the work was written. A sample self-observation concludes Part III, concisely mapping this author’s mental, emotional and interpretive journey through a particular performance of the final *Amhran* movement of the Christopher Rouse *Flute Concerto*.

¹⁷⁰ Rhonda Larson, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

¹⁷¹ Jessica Warren-Acosta, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

¹⁷² Mary Stolper, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

CHAPTER 11

COLLABORATION – A BRIEF DISCUSSION

The Christopher Rouse *Flute Concerto* (1993) was mentioned previously in Chapter 8 (p. 61) with reference to the impact of world events on the strength of connections made between performer and audience. For further context regarding the power this work possesses, composer Christopher Rouse explains the intentions and background of his *Concerto*:

I feel a deep ancestral tug of recognition...[with] the arts and traditions...of Celtic origin. I have attempted to reflect my responses to these stimuli in my flute concerto, a five-movement work cast in a somewhat loose arch form. The first and last movements bear the title 'Àmhran' (Gaelic for 'song') and are simple melodic elaborations for the solo flute over the accompaniment of orchestral strings. They were intended in a general way to evoke the traditions of Celtic, especially Irish, folk music but to couch the musical utterance in what I hoped would seem a more spiritual, even metaphysical, manner through the use of extremely slow tempi, perhaps not unlike some of the recordings of the Irish singer Enya...

In a world of daily horrors...it seems that only isolated, individual tragedies serve to sensitize us to the potential harm man can do to his fellow. For me, one such instance was the abduction and brutal murder of the two-year old English lad James Bulger at the hands of a pair of ten-year old boys. I followed this case closely during the time I was composing my concerto and was unable to shake the horror of these events from my mind. The central movement of this work is an elegy dedicated to James Bulger's memory, a small token of remembrance for a life senselessly and cruelly snuffed out.¹⁷³

The music expressing the tragic story at the foundation of the *Concerto* “repeatedly receives...a rare, emotional audience response.”¹⁷⁴ One such “emotional audience response” to the work occurred in 1997 at the 25th Annual National Flute Association

¹⁷³ “Christopher Rouse Flute Concerto program notes,” Reprinted by kind permission of Christopher Rouse, accessed 8/3/2011, <http://www.christopherrouse.com/flutectopress.html>

¹⁷⁴ Adeline Tomasone, “Christopher Rouse’s Flute Concerto: Origins, Observations and Analysis” (DMA diss., Temple University, 2007), p. 50.

Convention in Chicago with soloist Carol Wincenc performing. According to Carol, “people STILL come up to [her] and say ‘oh my God, we’ll never forget it’...people were weeping.”¹⁷⁵ Additional information about this memorable performance reveals that this was no ordinary concert.

The genesis and development of the work reveals a depth not always seen in the performer/composer relationship. Acquaintances since their time at Oberlin College, Carol and Christopher began collaborating on the *Concerto* in the early 1990s. Through their collaboration, they discovered a shared Celtic-Irish heritage. Also during that time, Carol explains, “both our kids were 2 [years old]...and the 3rd movement is about that child who was killed when he was 2...so there was all that poignancy about talking about being a parent of a very young child.”¹⁷⁶ The numerous common connections between the performer and composer contributed to a deeper connection between the performer and the music. “You pick up on an essence of a person...and because that piece has so many moods...it has this rampage, wild kind of temperament about it. I sort of picked up on Christopher’s inner life, and then linked with my inner life, where you address transcendence, anger, lots of things like that.”¹⁷⁷

At the intermission of the memorable 1997 National Flute Association Convention concert, immediately before the Rouse *Concerto* performance, was a commemorative event for a disaster involving a PanAm flight that had exploded with children on board.¹⁷⁸ When the tragic story at the foundation of the *Concerto* met an audience that had just been reminded of another story of equally tragic proportions, the

¹⁷⁵ Carol Wincenc, Telephone Interview.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid.

audience's softened hearts became synched with the performer's depth of experience with the music, thus creating an intensely palpable and unforgettable connection.

The circumstances of the concert along with the strength of the emotional connections between the performer, the composer and the subject of the *Concerto*, undoubtedly contributed to the special impact this performance had upon the audience. Since not every performer has such connections to composers or works they perform, several questions arise from this discussion. How important are these connections to optimal performance? How much do stories and intentions, when applicable to the music, affect communication? Must an audience know the background of a work in order to fully appreciate it? While comprehensive answers to these questions may be difficult to determine, the results of the present study can offer a starting point.

As discussed earlier (pp. 23-24), the more an artist *becomes* the music, the more persuasive the performance. Broad life experience, applied to music being mentally and physically internalized by a performer, can profoundly influence that performer's concept of the music, of creativity, and of his or her ability to openly communicate that music to an audience. While it would be ideal for a performer to collaborate directly with the composer of a work to be performed, if that possibility does not exist, it remains completely within the ability of performers, as the results of this study indicate, to use a wealth of life experience and creativity to help forge a deep commitment to the music. Similarly, clarifying musical ideas through the use of stories, colors, historical context, and emotional intentions that a performer may find relevant to the music at hand, combined with thorough preparation, also support a performer's commitment to an

interpretation of the music. Valid, emotional, and even optimal performances can be had when artists earnestly commit to expressing the music.

For an audience to get the most out of a performance, this study reveals that sometimes it is beneficial for performers to provide some background information. As noted in Chapter 8 (p. 62), when the type of music to be performed involved an unfamiliar musical language, the soloist discovered that verbal explanations helped the audience become familiar with the language, anticipate certain moments in the work, and connect to the performer and to the piece. Most cases in this study revealed that the music itself could stand on its own merits. However, performers need to be aware that they can help empower audiences, in numerous ways, to respond to the musical experiences with more insight, discernment and enjoyment. Thorough preparation, imagination, openness to the moment, and sincere engagement with the audience (through performance, spoken interaction, and visual aids), are among the tools advocated by soloists in this study to cultivate connection.

SAMPLE SELF-OBSERVATION

For additional insight into a musician's experience of an optimal performance, the following sample self-observation is my own account. While it details a performance of the final *Amhran* movement of the Christopher Rouse *Flute Concerto* in a traditional concert hall setting, there are two notable modifications to the standard concerto format. First, as part of a summer masterclass study program, this performance did not involve full orchestra, but piano accompaniment. Second, the performance occurred in a small concert hall setting, typical of recitals, with approximately 150 seats.

At the final recital of The 2010 Panoramic Flutist Summer Seminar, hosted by flute soloist Christina Jennings and the University of Colorado – Boulder, I had the opportunity to perform with piano the final *Amhran* movement of the Christopher Rouse *Flute Concerto*. This performance would be one of my last as a full-time student, having recently finished my coursework and lessons and become a doctoral candidate at Rice University (studying with Leone Buyse), and before joining the faculty as Assistant Professor of Flute and Theory at St. Olaf College.

This was an optimal performance to me because I applied what I had learned at the summer course, felt connected with the audience and in the moment, felt wholly involved in communicating the music (in flow), and received very positive reactions from the audience. Along with what I had been working on at Rice with Ms. Buyse (including improvements in articulation and intonation), I used lessons learned from Christina Jennings during that week (such as more effectively holding and suspending energy within the music over long silences). I also applied another lesson from the course taught

by Jean Ferrandis. His “swimming pool of *mf*” concept, acknowledges that the music already surrounds us (as if being in a ‘swimming pool’ of music) and that we only need to open our awareness in order to connect with it. This concept became for me “swimming pool of love” throughout my preparation. I felt this during the performance, as if I were embracing the audience from within myself.

That summer, I was also growing more familiar with another technique I learned from Jean Ferrandis to play high register notes softly and yet in a soaring manner, without excess tension in the lips or neck. This technique supported my vision of the piece. My vision of the movement as something celestial, extremely intimate, vulnerable and tender, and yet tinged with the resolution of hope, pushed my technique to find not only a lightness in my upper register soft range, but one that would also allow my sound to soar over very long phrases. By using lighter air and a smaller lip aperture, while maintaining freedom in my neck, shoulders, arms and lower back, especially, I was able to both economize the breath and find the quality in tone and accurate intonation I sought.

Since truly opening up to people is actually difficult for me, especially in a group setting, I find the structure of a concert setting quite comforting. The stage is sacred territory, in a way, where I not only feel obligated to be true, but also free to be true. There is nothing to hide behind when on stage, and I can be, act, share, access and perform from everything my life experiences have given me. For the Rouse performance, I sought to be as vulnerable to my audience as possible, to access the intrinsic power of a moment and the absolute innocence of being that originally captured my attention upon first hearing Carol Wincenc’s recording of the work. I sought to have silences that were pregnant with so much to say and yet no words to express. Because

the intensity of the story and the purity of the music in the final movement required more of me, I needed to practice this vulnerability while practicing the music. Even though I did have a guiding ‘map of emotions’ for the movement and for the performance, I allowed time for the music and emotions to occur. I did not force them out; I let them emerge. I was telling a story without words, but with energy, enveloping me and everyone else within a “swimming pool of love.” It felt healing, truthful, honest, calm, timeless, hopeful, and real.

Below is a brief recollection of the conscious thoughts and feelings I experienced during this special performance:

Just before I walk on stage, I pray, and gather the familiar pre-performance nerves into a deep breath, where they transform into more stable and powerful energy. I let myself feel loved and love. I let my interpretation of this final movement pass through me again – the first half still possesses a somewhat anguished undertone from the intensity of the preceding movements (I remember these sentiments from which I will let my initial music emerge). The second half is more hopeful...(the story) still hurts, but there is a belief in goodness and in the healing of humanity...that there is forgiveness and acceptance even at the end of tragedy.

I’m on stage and feel comfortable. My feet feel stable, my knees are released, my lower back is free, my head is on my spine... Margaret McDonald plays the tuning note, and I briefly play to match the piano pitch. I’m already in the piece. I hear the two measures before I play. My heart swells. This is for you. I breathe and exhale into the flute. G Major – what a heavenly chord – stretches slowly to the open-sounding, solid D Major chord. I raise the pitch of my high D to match the piano. The gesture is long and I

feel myself feeling the room expand before me with love. This is for them. Life hurts but there is hope. Release the neck...I'm not trying for the high G, and it comes out effortlessly. I'm in the music now. Listen, feel, be here. This is for you. Those beautiful 4-3 suspensions; keep my pitch up there. Hold the energy; listen to the silence.

Breathe. This second part is more turbulent but also more hopeful. The story says I need to accept. Even tragedy has a reason for being. Believe there is hope. This is for you. These achingly amazing intervals... Another suspension, hold the energy. The next breath has a beam of sunshine. It seems far away but it's not. It's here, we're here. Love this moment. Love yourself. This is for us.

A break in the line – hold the energy. The piano, and what I imagine as the orchestral strings, plays chords without me. I remember. Remember the story. Accept... Breathe... Why? Why do things like that [the Bulger story] happen? Accept... Breathe... D-G, V-I, Accept. Believe there was a reason. Hold the energy. Hold the silence. Love this moment. This is for you.

In connection to the tragic story behind the Rouse *Concerto*, and particularly to my interpretation of the final movement as suggesting acceptance, I offer this closing quote by Robert Jourdain:

Music idealizes emotions negative and positive alike. By so doing, it momentarily perfects our emotional lives. The 'meaning' we feel is not in the music as such, but in our own responses to the world, responses that we carry about with us always. Music serves to perfect those responses, to make them beautiful. By so doing, music imparts dignity to experience that often is far from dignified. And by imparting pleasure even to negative emotions, music serves to justify sufferings large and small, assuring us that it has not all been for nothing.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁹ Robert Jourdain, *Music, The Brain, and Ecstasy: How Music Captures Our Imagination* (New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1997), p. 322.

CHAPTER 12

CONCLUSION

In addressing the concept of optimal communication, solo flutist Emily Beynon of the Concertgebouw Orchestra, graciously supplied the following reasoning: “I’m not sure that I have ever even considered ‘optimal communication with an audience’ as being a separate topic for thought/work. That’s just what being a musician is, isn’t it?! As [German poet Johann Wolfgang von] Goethe [1749-1832] said, ‘music begins where words end!’ ‘Speaking’ to an audience through my music/flute is why I needed to become a musician.”¹⁸⁰ Communication is an essential component of the music profession. With the capacity to influence audience emotions and states of being, musicians have a great responsibility in today’s economic and cultural climate to effectively communicate with audiences in performance.

This study reveals that top performers cultivate optimal communication throughout their preparation and performances by utilizing a variety of tools and attitudes involving visual, narrative, analytical, physical and even spiritual cues. Hence, this survey shows that performers experience much more than a trance-like state. Respondents were usually aware of various kinds of emotions and sensations while performing, and further characterized these experiences as special connections to the audience. These artists also seek more than a surface level of understanding, and instead aim to, in a way, *become* the work in order to persuasively perform the work. The depth at which these artists internalize a musical work has a direct influence on their level of confidence, and thus persuasiveness, in sharing the music on a meaningful level with the

¹⁸⁰ Emily Beynon, soloist and principal flutist with the Concertgebouw Orchestra, Emailed Response, May 16, 2011.

audience. Conclusions from this study about how distractions or lack of attention increase the possibility of disconnection with an audience may help reveal why artists give such importance to concentration as indicated in the Important Parameters Analysis (pp. 48-49). The results of this study assert that the variety and depth of responses regarding meaningful connections experienced by performers warrants further examination. Furthermore, the recent interdisciplinary surge of interest in musicians' brains has the potential to inspire more substantial collaboration and discussion in the near future among musicians, psychologists and scientists.

Many gains can result from a focus on optimizing communication. As a teacher, I currently share with my students many of the tools learned from this study. I have found that asking my students questions about what they are thinking during their performance helps me guide them better. If their thoughts, for example, are not on the music during a performance, but on how their toes are curled while playing a high note, or on how others are judging their playing, I can help them by recognizing that their attention is not as complete as it could be, that perhaps the strength of their interpretation is not captivating enough for them, or that there are physical and emotional issues that need to be addressed before public performance in order for them and their audience to have a more positive experience. What is clear from this study is that preparing for optimal performance requires active participation and engaged practice.

This study can benefit psychologists and neuroscientists as well. As a primary source document containing raw data about performers' experiences of optimal communication, this study offers a wealth of information reflecting the existence of important parameters and perspectives that may not have yet been fully explored in these

fields. First-person accounts of conscious thoughts and sensations experienced during preparation and performance provide insights into the workings of the brain. These accounts may also help psychologists and neuroscientists explore neural connections and devise new procedures to improve brain research and health. The groundbreaking potential in this type of interdisciplinary research has already begun to emerge.

While Goethe's quote may be true, this study reveals that understanding musicians, from their own perspective, begins with what their words can *suggest*. Meaningful experiences are important and powerful catalysts to affect change, raise curiosity, and develop the highest capacities of our minds. Musicians are able to communicate and foster such connections between themselves and audiences. Those unforgettable moments may be rare, but they happen often enough to keep the performing musician engaged in further developing musical gifts in order to re-live that connection.

While the "moment" itself cannot be completely controlled, musicians can do various things to prepare themselves and their music to such high and profound levels so that they are able to optimize musical communication when those moments do appear. This is one reason that top musicians pursue this art and dedicate their lives to music with great passion, discipline and focus.

While the current study is subjective in nature, based on the personal points of view of thirty-eight flute soloists, a number of commonalities emerged, which could be further explored by scientists and psychologists using more sophisticated approaches. Such studies could reveal the empirical benefits for others that are experienced by the professional performing musician. One potential limitation of this study is the relatively small cross-section of flute participants. The insights provided by these flutists are not

solely limited to flutists. While future studies could possibly be improved with a larger cross-section of participating flutists, it would indeed be worthwhile to extend the survey to musicians of all kinds. Such investigations may identify common characteristics across disciplines, as well as recognize prevalent traits among musicians of a particular instrument. For example, as discussed earlier in this document, concert pianists and violinists are traditionally expected to play from memory, and flutists are often more at liberty to choose whether or not to play from memory. Beneficial questions to ask include the following: Do such expectations affect these instrumentalists' preparation methods and effectiveness of communication? How does an application of such information transfer to other areas outside of music (such as manual labor, education, sports, jobs involving computers, or social work)?

Research into the processes involved in optimal musical communication can be of great importance to musicians and non-musicians alike. As Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, author of *Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience*, confirms,

When a person is able to organize his or her consciousness so as to experience flow as often as possible, the quality of life is inevitably going to improve, because...even the usually boring routines of work become purposeful and enjoyable. In flow we are in control of our psychic energy, and everything we do adds order to consciousness.... A well-known rock climber explains: 'It's exhilarating to come closer and closer to self-discipline. You make your body go and everything hurts; then you look back in awe at the self, at what you've done, it just blows your mind. It leads to ecstasy, to self-fulfillment. If you win these battles enough, that battle against yourself, at least for a moment, it becomes easier to win the battles in the world.... The 'battle' is really against the entropy that brings disorder to consciousness...it is a struggle for establishing control over attention.¹⁸¹

¹⁸¹ Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, *Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience* (New York: HarperCollins, 1990), pp. 40-41.

Attention is fundamental to this study, and perhaps the most significant knowledge that can be learned by the study of professional, high-functioning musicians. For many performing musicians, their complete engagement in the musical art, including sharing the music with others, is the source of the highest benefits. An investigation into the highest ideals of music reveals the inner workings of the intense processes involved in optimal performance. Since these workings are generally experienced by top performers as an elimination (or at least a significant reduction) of the psychological and physical barriers between themselves and the audience, this direct connection allows performers to communicate with other musicians and the audience so that all are not only engaged in the performance, but also taken by the performance into a musical realm of existence often accompanied by a sense of timelessness, and an acute awareness of the personally significant meaning of the moment.

Such explorations not only provide researchers a window into how music and the brain work, but also provide greater insight into the most profound benefits of music. Subjective inquiries offer observations into the significant power and importance of music, and further clarify the workings underlying the transcendent value of human connection and interaction, which affects all human beings. Perhaps extraordinary performances, which mine the deepest feelings of reverence and poignancy, deserve more penetrating words than “optimal communication.” Musical moments that make us forget ourselves and instead incite us to heal our divisions and commune with the energy of *being*, may be the greatest gift and calling performers could ever work toward.

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APPENDICES

GENERAL INVITATION LETTER [Invitations sent May 7 – June 2, 2011]

Dear _____,

I am the new Assistant Professor of Flute at St. Olaf College in Minnesota (USA) and am currently working to complete my doctoral dissertation at Rice University in Houston, Texas. Leone Buyse is serving on my doctoral committee. I would like to invite you to participate in my doctoral research. I am investigating soloist's strategies for achieving optimal musical communication with an audience. While my focus is within the context of concerto performances, my hope is that you might share your strategies as a soloist, to help further flute pedagogy and performance. Would you be willing to participate?

Thank you so very much for your time and inspiration.

With best wishes to you in all your endeavors!

Sincerely,
Catherine Ramirez

-- Catherine Ramirez
Assistant Professor of Flute and Theory, St. Olaf College
1520 St. Olaf Avenue, Northfield, MN 55057
Contact information and Website: catherineramirez.com

GENERAL FOLLOW-UP LETTER [Deadlines May 31 – July 7, 2011]

Dear _____,

Thank you so much for considering to do this!!

As for my research, it will take the form of a Flute Soloist Questionnaire (12 questions). I have attached a copy to this email. If you prefer not to write your answers, I would be happy to arrange a phone or video interview at your convenience.

As for the questions themselves, the amount of detail and depth in your answers will be completely up to you. If at all possible, my hope is that the questionnaires might be completed by _____.

Thank you so much again!!
All best,
Catherine

Attachment: RICE_DMA_DOC_questionnaire_mod.doc

FLUTE SOLOIST QUESTIONNAIRE (12 questions)

NAME: _____(optional)

PART 1 – PRELIMINARY QUESTIONS (1-3)

- 1) Do you play concerti regularly, occasionally, seldom, never?
- 2) When playing a concerto, do you modify anything in your playing to perform ‘beyond’ the stage (such as physical subtleties of posture / balance / arms, type of breathing, usage/projection of air, etc.)?
- 3) Do you typically memorize your concerti (like pianists, vocalists and string soloists)? If you do, why, and what is your particular memorizing process? If not, why not?

PART 2 – PREPARATION / PERFORMANCE (4-9)

- 4) After technical mastery has been achieved, are there specific things you do to feel ready to perform persuasively?
- 5) On a scale of 1-5, 5 being most important, and 1 being not very important, please indicate the relative importance of the following parameters in your own individual process for preparing, creating and projecting your interpretation for optimal performance (a-o):
 - a) understanding the structure of the work
 - b) uncovering an emotional journey or connecting with the work through feelings
 - c) memorizing the work
 - d) comfort level with the orchestra and the size of the hall
 - e) work on mental focus, concentration and intention
 - f) finding balance between humility and confidence
 - g) incorporating techniques of physical freedom (ex. to release excess muscle tension)
 - h) connecting with spirit (more than just imagination, a spiritual connection could result from prayer or meditation)
 - i) achieving a level of mastery, complete commitment, and/or “flow”
 - j) leaving room for spontaneous creativity and play
 - k) belief, trust, love
 - l) finding value and meaning in the work
 - m) understanding the work through intuition
 - n) exercising and building endurance, energy, enthusiasm, intensity
 - o) other _____
- 6) How do you know when, or feel as though, you have not communicated your message to an audience?

7) From your individual perspective as a performing musician, please describe an instance in which you felt a palpable connection between yourself and the audience while performing. Would you describe this event as “meaningful” or “successful” musical communication?

8) In your most engaging moments performing a concerto, was there anything in your preparation (or performance) that helped this moment to occur?

9) Without the use of extra-musical devices (such as speaking and visual aids), what general advice can you offer to aid in optimizing musical communication as a soloist?

PART 3 – ROUSE CONCERTO QUESTIONS (10-12, 13-15)

10) Given the disturbing events that influenced the Rouse Flute Concerto, what role does that story play (or not play) in your approach to the piece?

11) How relevant is the level of abstraction of this work in developing your interpretation?

12) As a performer, is your main focus to realize the composer’s intentions, your own intentions, a combination of the two, or something else? With newer compositions like this work (vs. standard repertoire), what freedoms or deviations do you add to the score?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR INPUT AND PARTICIPATION. If you have any additional comments or need more space for your answers, please continue.

May I contact you for a telephone, video chat or email interview?

☐ Yes, my contact information is as follows:

☐ No, thanks. ☐ I prefer to remain anonymous.

SPECIFIC QUESTIONS TO CAROL WINCENC (who premiered the work) (13-15):

What did you need to know from the composer in order to develop your interpretation? Did you converse with him prior to learning the completed work, throughout the process, or only after an interpretation was formed? How did these discussions help your performance?

COMPLETE SOLOIST QUOTES – Part 1 of 3

Emphasis added by the author in **bold** highlights aspects of meaningful connections mentioned in Chapter 8 CONNECTION. Quotes grouped below in sections I-III.

I. CONNECTION –

Most detailed explanations (Nos. 1-20)

1) “I’m not sure how to describe the energy that develops between a performer and an audience when they are really in sync. I have been lucky enough to have it happen a few times. It’s some **invisible line of communication** that develops. A temporary ‘relationship.’”¹⁸²

2) “In a chamber music concert in Taos, New Mexico, I was doing [J.S. Bach’s] *Brandenburg Concerto #2*. It felt like it transcended everyone on the stage...and I’m pretty confident that the audience felt that. Everyone is committed, involved, participating, but sometimes, at least from my perspective, everyone is feeling that...[and from] my interpretation of that evening...it was special. So special, in fact, that I spent a lot of time asking why I don’t have more of those experiences. [Another experience like it] happened seven years before. [It’s when there’s] **a perfect balance between being totally involved in every way in the performance, with an awareness that people are reacting to it in a positive, almost intense way.** You can still respond to the audience. You can feel the involvement of the audience – the engagement of the audience and your own engagement in the music. Is this meaningful or successful musical communication – yes, absolutely. There is such **ultimate interaction** when you’re feeling something so powerful from the **audience that’s inspiring you to give even more.** It may happen more in the popular music world than in classical music world...they do their act so many times, they can solely concentrate on communicating. There’s often a wall...[because] we’re often focused on simply trying to play well. To really ‘let our musical hair down’ and really connect through music is neglected. **It boils down to preparation and opportunity to perform.** We are really not as comfortable as we should be to focus solely on communication. There has to be **an intent to desire it before it can happen;** we have to be comfortable to let that happen.”¹⁸³

3) “I just describe it as a ‘**connection of energy**’ through musical expression. You know when it’s there, and you can feel all levels of it. When ‘that feeling’ is high, there is no other feeling like it on the planet...to reach that ‘feeling’ is what you accomplished...not that you ‘won’ over an audience. YOU actually moved people with your own energy so they saw a part of you that was totally and undeniably real.”¹⁸⁴

¹⁸² Jessica Warren-Acosta, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

¹⁸³ Demarre McGill, Telephone Interview.

¹⁸⁴ Mary Stolper, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

- 4) “Hard to admit, but I sort of go into ‘**my own world**’ and I become unaware of the audience. I do notice when they are particularly silent and I interpret that as a connection. Other than that, I am not really aware.”¹⁸⁵
- 5) “In my experience, the most successful or meaningful times have been cloudy in my memory. I believe heavily in the idea of Zen and reaching a point **where time stands still and often in these cases, one has a bit of memory loss**. One touches something so deep, so personal inside of oneself that you forget the small details of the experience.”¹⁸⁶
- 6) “I was once performing at a house concert in Los Angeles for a fundraiser and performed Ian Clarke’s *Zoom Tube* for the group. While the piece is always a crowd pleaser that I’ve played many times, I felt that particular performance really stuck out as memorable for it’s success as a connection between myself and the audience. For one, I definitely felt that I had **ownership over the music** and was performing the way I wanted to – and I knew I was **projecting that confidence in my performance to the audience**. There was also a writer in the audience, and he wrote a very moving and poignant poem in response to the performance.”¹⁸⁷
- 7) “There is a **sense of ‘awe’** that is always present – this can be as simple as the audience gasping when you come onstage – perhaps struck by the physical entrance of you...Or the **silence** in the room during a particularly soft section, the **energy** after the last note in the **applause**, but more certainly by **talking** with the audience and orchestra after the performance.”¹⁸⁸
- 8) “There was a performance with the Vermont Mozart Festival, where I looked out into the audience and I could see the smiling faces of the audience members reacting to my music. Usually, in a performance, the audience is separated from the performer. The performer is on a large stage, with bright lights that block the audience from view. In my performance, which was outside, at dusk, I could see the faces and reactions of the audience. Since the concert was outside, with lawn seating, I also **saw a girl dancing to my music** while I was performing! It was such a wonderful **sight**, which didn’t distract me at all. On the contrary, I was **able to reach out to someone specific**, which really helped me communicate my emotional attachment to the music and the moment.”¹⁸⁹
- 9) “I recently performed [John] Corigliano’s *Pied Piper Fantasy* and I think...that it is incredibly written to really convey the story of the Pied Piper. I think that really translates well with an audience whether they like contemporary music or not. The **looks of curiosity** were great because **they were actively listening**. Whether they ultimately liked it or not didn’t really matter to me, I’m just glad **they were interested**. Then add to it the children’s flute choir that joins the piece at the end; even amongst the musicians in

¹⁸⁵ Laurel Ann Maurer, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

¹⁸⁶ Eric Lamb, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

¹⁸⁷ Greg Milliren, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

¹⁸⁸ Christina Jennings, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

¹⁸⁹ Jennifer Grim, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

the orchestra you could **see lots of emotional reactions** when leading the children out of the hall. Anywhere from sad that we were leaving to pride and joy seeing the young ones performing so confidently.”¹⁹⁰

10) “While playing a solo-concert where I didn’t stop between the 8 pieces, but [went] from one piece to the other through improvisation, the **audience didn’t give a sign of impatience, a ‘no-tension-feeling’ but kept the intensity that was released only at the end.** It was like a **strong tie between the audience and myself.**”¹⁹¹

11) “In an important and ‘high pressure’ solo recital in New York City, I felt as though I **played ‘beyond myself’**, a feeling I would attribute to performing in a spiritual realm (Christians call it ‘playing in the Spirit’). The audience reaction was also extraordinary. I felt as though I had played the recital for the glory of the Lord instead of for myself.”¹⁹²

12) “If this connection with the audience happens this is very meaningful to me! I find these moments hard to describe – I especially feel this when there is **complete silence in the hall while I play** and this **‘magic’ atmosphere/energy starts building up.**”¹⁹³

13) “At times there is a very **powerful sense of connection**, when I can **feel the audience is riding on my every breath.** These moments can be literally life-changing – for myself and the audience. That is a huge part of why I like to perform with my eyes open...so that I can **see my audience and feel the energy between us.** I try to **communicate very directly, and I think this is why my audiences often feel comfortable showing me that they are getting my energy...**this is especially true with children in the audience.”¹⁹⁴

14) “I remember moments in the music where I felt deep connections with the audience happened: André Jolivet’s *Cinq Incantations* 4th movement (**as if they were being drawn in** to the intimate sound), Sigfried Karg-Elert’s *Sonata Appassionata* going from a *forte* dynamic to *piano* at the top of the second page, Toru Takemitsu’s *Voice* – the feeling was so powerful that the light fixture flickered (!), Toru Takemitsu’s *Air* – at my New York recital debut – I risked going for a much softer dynamic on a particular interval and the poignancy of the piece and the connection I felt with the audience became so immediate, Paul Taffanel’s *Der Freischütz*...and one of the most special moments I remember is improvising from my living room with the balcony door open for passersby in Queens, NY. In all of these occurrences, **I risked going deeper, exposing more of myself and my vulnerability.** The music either led to a connection that felt

¹⁹⁰ Viviana Cumplido, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

¹⁹¹ Michael Faust, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

¹⁹² Bonita Boyd, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

¹⁹³ Ulrike Anton, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

¹⁹⁴ Wissam Boustany, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

more internal and soft, more frightening and commanding, more involved in the character of an operatic piece...or simply unfolded in its own time for everyone present.”¹⁹⁵

15) “I played an Armenian work that suggested an ethnic instrument and mode of performance that called for a meditative and improvisatory style. There was a soundtrack consisting of voices outlining simple chords and providing a drone. My instrument was alto flute. As I played, I could **sense the audience entering the same world of infinite sadness that was released in the music, which I was both feeling and ‘channeling’** through the flute. **Comments afterwards confirmed that many people were moved** (one said she was in tears) and had multiple ways of describing states of meditation, deep emotions, images or sensations. I consider a performance that provokes this kind of diverse but intense reaction successful, and it was quite meaningful to me for that reason. I was able to connect my artistic consciousness with their subconscious, which **took them to the zone I was in.**”¹⁹⁶

16) “**For both the performer(s) and the audience it feels fantastic if there is a well balanced combination between the expected and the surprise.** When I performed the [Krzysztof] Penderecki *Concerto* most people did not know the piece, but expected somewhat modern sounds. I could feel that the audience loved the performance because they could identify with music that represented...a somewhat traditional style...It felt “in the flow” during the performance.”¹⁹⁷

17) “The encore is really the time generally when they [the audience members] are more with you...not expecting it...they are more relaxed, you are more relaxed...In fact, we should play the whole concert like an encore! I feel the *duende*¹⁹⁸...makes me happy. It’s your energy. I played an encore, and asked them to sing with me, if they would like. In Japan, they **sang with me. I feel the silence**, after, the way they come to you, the way **they smile or cry**, they are very warm, because you give them something special. How difficult to describe...meaningful...all I can say is that ‘it makes me very happy’ and it’s why I like to be a musician.”¹⁹⁹

18) “To speak generally for a moment, feeling and responding to the energy of an audience is one of the most thrilling things about being a performing musician. Every performance is shaped by the connection my fellow performers and I feel with the audience, and each audience is unique, so there is a **sympiotic relationship between the players and the listeners.** To mention a recent example, my Dolce Suono Ensemble and I performed Gustav Mahler’s *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen* with bass-baritone Eric Owens during our Mahler 100/Schoenberg 60 Project in May 2011. We played Arnold

¹⁹⁵ Catherine Ramirez (document author), Questionnaire.

¹⁹⁶ Claudia Anderson, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

¹⁹⁷ Tatjana Ruhland, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

¹⁹⁸ “Duende,” “‘Tener duende’ can be loosely translated as *having soul*, a heightened state of emotion, expression and authenticity, often connected with flamenco,” accessed August 1, 2011, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Duende_%28art%29#cite_note-0.

¹⁹⁹ Jean Ferrandis, Telephone Interview.

Schoenberg's version for chamber ensemble of 10 players...without conductor, so it was an intimate dialogue between Eric Owens and...among all the musicians. **We listened and breathed and moved together, led and were followed, followed and were led, and let ourselves be carried** by this magnificent music. And we all **commented afterwards how we felt the audience was breathing with us**, joining us on our musical journey. Yes, I would describe this as a meaningful and successful example of musical communication."²⁰⁰

19) "2005 Meaningful as a healer – Performing the jury concert for 1000 people 10 years after the **earthquake** in Kobe, Japan"²⁰¹

20) "National Flute Association's 25th Anniversary [1997] in Chicago, performing the Christopher Rouse *Concerto* with Ransom Wilson conducting – people **STILL** come up to me and say 'oh my God, we'll never forget it'...people were weeping – what they had done at that Convention was that at intermission they had done a **tribute to the PanAm flight** (that blew up with kids on board, it was terrible) – people **STILL** talk about it...it's like the kind of thing where you remember where you were standing when [John F.] Kennedy was shot or when 9/11 happened...it had that much impact...Other ones are...I was playing the [Henryk] Gorecki *Concerto* at the Concertgebouw with 2500 people packed in there – every reviewer was there, the New York Times, all the European papers, Gorecki was there, I was seven and a half months pregnant – it was an unaccompanied, alto flute solo for four and a half minutes of *pppppp* [exceedingly soft] whole notes. It was just so dramatic, people just **LEPT** to their feet at the end. There are many moments...**playing for people who passed away**...the premiere of the Rouse in Finland, where audiences are very contained emotionally...that one, they gave a standing ovation. In Japan, they are so non-emotive...and then after your third encore – they **EXPLODE**...you can just tell by the **attention and quiet**...and sometimes I do **look out**...In the slow movement of the Lucas Foss *Renaissance Concerto*, it's so celestial...[intuitively] **you can just tell when the audience is raptured**."²⁰²

II. CONNECTION –

Brief descriptions by soloists who often feel connected in performance (Nos. 1-7)

1) "Almost every time I perform I feel this connection with audiences. I am so **grateful** that they took time out of their busy schedules to see me perform."²⁰³

2) "Honestly, I have **felt this communication** in virtually all of my Free Flight concerts and in about 50% of all of my classical concerts combined."²⁰⁴

²⁰⁰ Mimi Stillman, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

²⁰¹ Amy Porter, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

²⁰² Carol Wincenc, Telephone Interview.

²⁰³ Laurel Zucker, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

²⁰⁴ Jim Walker, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

- 3) “Usually if I am **enjoying** the music, so is the audience.”²⁰⁵
- 4) “The connection with the audience is an **integral part of each and every performance**.”²⁰⁶
- 5) “I often do **feel a big connection**...On the ship, I almost always get a standing ovation...[The audience] gets passionate about it – which is what I love – **when I can open someone’s eyes to the beauty of flute**, that’s when I feel like I’ve accomplished something.”²⁰⁷
- 6) “At the Canadian Embassy in Mexico City...Lots of music from memory, sometimes I **look** at the audience, sometimes I look around, or my eyes are closed. Try to make it not about me, but try to be true to the composer, and then try to get everything I’m capable of giving from the music. I think the audience loves that...I truly **give everything of myself**, and there always seems to be a connection. Yes, absolutely [this was meaningful], from my perspective anyway.”²⁰⁸
- 7) “I would have to say that I experience this in nearly every performance. It is why I love to perform, I love to **‘give’ what I have**, and I **honor the audience** who made the effort to attend! I have even had times when I’ve had to perform **when I was very ‘ill’**, but no one knew. **It was a ‘no connection’ feeling from my perspective, but the audience loved it**---again, this is the **power of the music**, not the feelings of the performer.”²⁰⁹

III. CONNECTION –

Broad range of topics involving performer and audience connections (Nos. 1-9)

- 1) “I was performing for the New York Flute Club, had been **ill**, and had taken some nasal medication that morning (because I couldn’t breathe) and was terribly dry for the concert. This made me feel like it was affecting my sound and I was terribly distracted and **did not feel like I was connecting with the audience at all** due to this distraction. However, after a movement of the Gieseking *Sonatine*, I heard a sigh of pleasure from someone in the audience. So, I thought to myself, “This may not be going as badly as I think” and then I calmed down a bit and my mouth was less dry and I felt better and the **concert was a big success with a lot of positive feedback from many people**. So, after this experience I have concluded that it is not always necessary to think about communicating with the audience, **sometimes it just happens** for some unexplained reason.”²¹⁰

²⁰⁵ David Shostac, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

²⁰⁶ Sharon Bezaly, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

²⁰⁷ Viviana Guzman, Telephone Interview.

²⁰⁸ Susan Hoeppner, Telephone Interview.

²⁰⁹ Rhonda Larson, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

²¹⁰ Katherine Kemler, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

- 2) “I have a really amazing performance of the Lukas Foss *Renaissance Concerto* – that was the first time I performed the piece...it was difficult, I had the piece was memorized... You have to at some point **let yourself go and trust in the process...you kind of get outside yourself**. Some people said they were crying during parts of it...if you can make an audience member cry...if they’re feeling something – that seems pretty ‘successful’...you’ve touched them in some way... ‘Successful’ – it’s not necessarily the size of the audience...there are different kinds of audiences...some tend to be more overt; **even if you don’t play up to your potential, and crash, and the audience appreciates the performance, it wouldn’t necessarily be ‘unsuccessful’ because you still gave something to the audience.**”²¹¹
- 3) “I **prefer to focus on how I am feeling** –to send out the message—rather than observe if it is being received”²¹²
- 4) “When I feel the **audience allows me** to be me I do my best work. Successful means forgetting technique.”²¹³
- 5) “[I feel a connection] during the cadenzas, and to a slightly lesser degree the slow movement, of the Mozart *D Major Concerto*. The hall was completely **silent which gave me the ability** to play as softly as possible and take as much time as I wanted. I truly felt as if I was expressing myself directly and intimately. Both the recording and the audience comments confirmed that these were unique moments.”²¹⁴
- 6) “Very modern work – *Eloquentia* by Manuel Sosa... I thought the audience wasn’t going to understand what I was doing because it was 98% extended techniques...I’d need to demonstrate all these things before the performance...for this piece **talking was indispensable**...audiences want to have a connection...if they don’t understand the music, they can’t connect with it emotionally. If they don’t understand the language, how are they going to understand what you’re saying? So I think I was making an **emotional connection during the talk...also breaking down this formal barrier** that seems to be part and parcel of a concerto performance. One of the best moments was when I was trying to demonstrate a multiphonic, and it wouldn’t come out and I said ‘oh well, practice time is over’ and the audience just cracked up! It’s a work in progress...you have this connection...here’s a human being playing the flute the best he can.”²¹⁵
- 7) “I’d say [more connections during] ‘intimate’ concerts, in which I can **speak** with the audience or at least **see** people’s reaction to my playing. Again I think there are no ways to know to which level a musical performance communicates something. Music does not have the power to communicate things or feelings or philosophical thoughts as

²¹¹ Linda Chatterton, Personal Interview.

²¹² Aralee Dorough, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

²¹³ Gary Schocker, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

²¹⁴ Caen Thomason-Redus, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

²¹⁵ Adam Kuenzel, Personal Interview.

precisely as language so a “work X” can mean “Y” for me and “Z” for you. And we are both right regarding our own experiences and ways to perceive the music.”²¹⁶

8) “I was in Lima, Peru, at the National Museum, soloing with the National Orchestra of Peru, and I was performing [François] Devienne’s *7th Concerto* and the slow movement caused a standing ovation. This gave me goose bumps and such a **satisfaction** that I had done everything right as to **playing with my heart, my mind and all my physical and intellectual work had been paid off!** There is nothing like it.”²¹⁷

9) “When Martin Amlin and I performed his second sonata on a Friday evening gala concert at the San Diego NFA convention in 2005 the audience broke into spontaneous applause after the first movement. I was absolutely **thrilled because my goal had been to introduce and share this fabulous new work with the broadest possible audience. Such a positive response** – before we had played the entire sonata – was very meaningful to me.”²¹⁸

²¹⁶ Marie-Hélène Breault, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

²¹⁷ Sergio Pallottelli, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

²¹⁸ Leone Buyse, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

COMPLETE SOLOIST QUOTES – Part 2 of 3

Emphasis added by the author in **bold** highlights aspects of disconnections mentioned in Chapter 9 DISCONNECTION. Quotes grouped below in sections I-III.

I. DISCONNECTION –

Indications from audience (Nos. 1-19)

- 1) “Usually only by the **audience reaction** to the performance. Sometimes by my **own feeling also of “dullness”** in the performance.”²¹⁹
- 2) “I know because I **feel the energy with audience, quality of silence, quality at the end – clapping, the way they clap**. Each culture is very different (clapping)...it’s more [about] the **silence**.”²²⁰
- 3) “I know when I have from the **look in the eyes** of the audience and orchestra.”²²¹
- 4) “Every audience has a certain ‘**energy**’ that affects me greatly.”²²²
- 5) “When I **hear the reaction of the applause**.”²²³
- 6) “**Talk** to individual people – to really know; or based on my own discriminating **feeling** on how I played.”²²⁴
- 7) “When I **don’t get a big reaction from the audience**.”²²⁵
- 8) “One just **feels when the audience is not listening** and just waits for the buffet afterwards. Audiences tend to get a little ‘**noisy**’ when that happens and **look bored**.”²²⁶
- 9) “By their **lack of enthusiasm**”²²⁷
- 10) “**Lack of applause and few visitors afterwards**”²²⁸
- 11) “There can be a **palpable feeling of something negative coming from the audience [reluctance to be there]**.”²²⁹

²¹⁹ Bonita Boyd, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

²²⁰ Jean Ferrandis, Telephone Interview.

²²¹ Christina Jennings, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

²²² Conor Nelson, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

²²³ Mary Stolper, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

²²⁴ Adam Kuenzel, Personal Interview.

²²⁵ Jessica Warren-Acosta, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

²²⁶ Ulrike Anton, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

²²⁷ Laurel Ann Maurer, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

²²⁸ Jim Walker, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

²²⁹ Katherine Kemler, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

- 12) “[**Tough to tell**]...New music audiences tend to be very vocal and opinionated. But sometimes, even when I think a new piece was a failure, audiences are enthusiastic, and I am then forced to reassess the music and its content.”²³⁰
- 13) “I probably never can tell when I have ‘not’ because when I think I have ‘not’, that particular piece will be the one people comment the most about, so I can never tell. That is the beauty and magic that music works! If the audience were to have a **lame applause** (response) from my playing any particular piece, AND start **walking out**, two by two, then I would know I really failed...but happily, I have not experienced this yet!”²³¹
- 14) “It’s hard to pinpoint exactly how we intuit reactions. I find that if they are really listening in the quiet parts (rather than **sounding restless**)...that’s a very good indication of an effective performance.”²³²
- 15) “When the **audience is unconcentrated, coughing or moving a lot**. And of course the **applause at the end** is a good indicator.”²³³
- 16) “By **feeling the concentration level of the audience** you know to what extent you have succeeded to ‘communicate your message.’”²³⁴
- 17) “2005 Northern Minnesota – blizzard...[**Could feel that**] **the audience wanted to go home**...What you can control is...what are you willing to share.”²³⁵
- 18) “I can **sense the attention and focus of the audience**. It is easier to sense the audience’s involvement in a smaller venue than in a large concert hall.”²³⁶
- 19) “Maybe the friendly **applauding rituals** of our classical concert audience will **never really let us know??** But I am sure we always get to the listeners...with 2000 people in the audience I strongly believe that there are many individual experiences at the same concert.”²³⁷

²³⁰ Eric Lamb, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

²³¹ Rhonda Larson, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

²³² Caen Thomason-Redus, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

²³³ Michael Faust, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

²³⁴ Sharon Bezaly, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

²³⁵ Linda Chatterton, Personal Interview.

²³⁶ Jennifer Grim, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

²³⁷ Tatjana Ruhland, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

II. DISCONNECTION – Indications from self (Nos. 1-9)

- 1) “**Gut feeling** – we get something from audience. **Deeply intuitive.**”²³⁸
- 2) “When I **do not get a very high feeling** when performing.”²³⁹
- 3) “If I am **nervous**, know that I am **not truly prepared**, or if there is **no ‘two way’ communication** with the audience.”²⁴⁰
- 4) “If I **feel uncomfortable or unprepared or distracted**, I know I probably did not communicate the musical message I intended or hoped, though sometimes people tell me they really enjoyed it. **It’s hard to know unless they tell you.**”²⁴¹
- 5) “Actually, I have come to understand that I **do not always know**, especially if I am in discomfort of some sort when I perform. Many times I do know and it **usually has to do with my not being able to do what I wanted with the music.**”²⁴²
- 6) “Usually I feel wooden and **not able to connect with myself or the audience.** The feeling is often accompanied by **physical tension.**”²⁴³
- 7) “If you have prepared well, **you know immediately when you haven’t executed something exactly the way you wanted to** and thus haven’t communicated quite in the way you intended. Still, you are probably still connecting and communicating very well.”²⁴⁴
- 8) “If I know I was really **distracted** during a performance...then I’d probably feel that I didn’t communicate the way I’d liked to.”²⁴⁵
- 9) “A feeling of **dissatisfaction** is hard to ignore!”²⁴⁶

²³⁸ Carol Wincenc, Telephone Interview.

²³⁹ Laurel Zucker, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

²⁴⁰ Sergio Pallottelli, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

²⁴¹ Catherine Ramirez (document author), Questionnaire.

²⁴² Claudia Anderson, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

²⁴³ Wissam Boustany, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

²⁴⁴ Greg Milliren, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

²⁴⁵ Viviana Cumplido, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

²⁴⁶ Leone Buyse, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

III. DISCONNECTION –

Descriptions by soloists who rarely experience sensations of disconnection (Nos. 1-7)

- 1) “[I have] **no control over them** [audience].”²⁴⁷
- 2) “I don’t feel that usually, so **can’t answer**.”²⁴⁸
- 3) “I’m **not sure how to answer this!**”²⁴⁹
- 4) “I **usually do [have a connection]**.”²⁵⁰
- 5) “There could be a world between what we felt during a performance and what the public felt. So having or not having communicated my message to the audience is not measurable. It is a **question of perception**, and perception implies subjectivity.”²⁵¹
- 6) “I don’t know when I have not communicated because those people don’t come up to me afterwards. If I play the composer’s intentions, not mine, I have done my job. **It’s not my message to communicate.**”²⁵²
- 7) “But **sometimes circumstances can interfere**, and keep you or the audience from full enjoyment, so you just let it go and try not to have the same thing happen next time!”²⁵³

²⁴⁷ Susan Hoeppner, Telephone Interview.

²⁴⁸ Gary Schocker, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

²⁴⁹ Aralee Dorrough, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

²⁵⁰ Viviana Guzman, Telephone Interview.

²⁵¹ Marie-Hélène Breault, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

²⁵² Amy Porter, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

²⁵³ David Shostac, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

COMPLETE SOLOIST QUOTES – Part 3 of 3

Emphasis added in **bold** highlights aspects of cultivating connections mentioned in Chapter 10 CULTIVATING CONNECTION. Quotes grouped below in sections I-III.

I. CULTIVATING CONNECTION –

Personal Well-Being / Interpersonal Collaboration (Nos. 1-5)

- 1) “When playing a concerto – the **orchestra and conductor can be a source of inspiration, enhancing the intensity of the performance.**”²⁵⁴
- 2) “As an American Jew whose ancestors came from Russia and Poland, I felt a **profound connection to the composer and the piece [David Finko’s *Concerto for Piccolo and Orchestra*]**, which reflects on his own life story as a Russian Jew and on the trials of the Jewish people in the Holocaust and living under the oppressive Soviet regime. **My own family history gave me a personal insight into the music. Working with a composer** provides an opportunity to hear about his or her vision directly, but in this case, because of the history and collective memory I shared with the composer, it made the experience particularly moving.”²⁵⁵
- 3) “Yes, [particularly a state of] **mental serenity and well-being. Feeling a great vibe from a full hall, having had a great night’s sleep and being in the company of great, great colleagues and friends to set the whole thing up!**”²⁵⁶
- 4) “**Driving a car as little as possible prior to the concert.**”²⁵⁷
- 5) “**Play the piece for the composer; it increases the commitment to play well.**”²⁵⁸

II. CULTIVATING CONNECTION –

Preparation / Practice (Nos. 1-15)

- 1) “**The better the preparation (generally time invested), the better the engagement is likely to occur**”²⁵⁹
- 2) “**Adequate preparation time, total commitment to the work, enthusiasm, concentration**”²⁶⁰

²⁵⁴ Sharon Bezaly, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

²⁵⁵ Mimi Stillman, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

²⁵⁶ Sergio Pallottelli, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

²⁵⁷ Laurel Zucker, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

²⁵⁸ Adam Kuenzel, Personal Interview.

²⁵⁹ Jim Walker, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

²⁶⁰ Leone Buyse, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

- 3) **“Obviously, the better prepared you are, the more freedom and confidence you have.”**²⁶¹
- 4) **“Knowing the piece in-side-out gives me just that extra security to take risks...these very often led to these great moments.”**²⁶²
- 5) **“Being prepared inside and out.”**²⁶³
- 6) **“Great familiarity with performing (not just knowing) the music is the key to engagement.”**²⁶⁴
- 7) **“One thing I like to do [is] play along with a recording so I get a sense of the orchestra’s sound and power in my ear.”**²⁶⁵
- 8) **“Preparation, repeat, repeat...”**²⁶⁶
- 9) **“A feeling of heightened sensitivity.”**²⁶⁷
- 10) **“Concentration and imagination while practicing.”**²⁶⁸
- 11) **“Total preparation and focusing on the work at hand.”**²⁶⁹
- 12) **“Visualization – test run...”**²⁷⁰
- 13) **“Visualization of what I want to occur ahead of time can be tremendously helpful.”**²⁷¹
- 14) **“Being diligent in practicing the expression and technique equally.”**²⁷²
- 15) **“As I’ve mentioned already, I think that practicing the music while in the mindset of communicating with your audience in an emotional way helps immensely...Making practicing fundamentals a regular part of my practice routine**

²⁶¹ Jessica Warren-Acosta, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

²⁶² Ulrike Anton, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

²⁶³ Rhonda Larson, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

²⁶⁴ Claudia Anderson, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

²⁶⁵ Viviana Cumplido, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

²⁶⁶ Susan Hoepfner, Telephone Interview.

²⁶⁷ Laurel Ann Maurer, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

²⁶⁸ Michael Faust, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

²⁶⁹ Eric Lamb, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

²⁷⁰ Linda Chatterton, Personal Interview.

²⁷¹ Katherine Kemler, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

²⁷² Caen Thomason-Redus, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

(practicing tone, vibrato, dynamics, etc, outside the context of music) helps immensely.”²⁷³

III. CULTIVATING CONNECTION – Sharpen Skills / Live the Moment (Nos. 1-10)

- 1) **“Be very tough when you work, never satisfied. Always base your work on the music, the clarity of ideas.”²⁷⁴**
- 2) **“Mental focus helped me more than anything else. I put all of my energy into enjoying myself and giving the best performance as I could, instead of being worried.”²⁷⁵**
- 3) **“Focus practice on potential spots where special moments could occur.”²⁷⁶**
- 4) **“One special hint: TUNE CAREFULLY! It can make all the difference in being comfortable enough to let the music flow.”²⁷⁷**
- 5) **“Constantly engage in every preparatory step and being true to myself.”²⁷⁸**
- 6) **“There is a moment when the Trust is finally there...and that inspires total commitment and listening on the part of all the musicians.”²⁷⁹**
- 7) **“I practice being spontaneous all the time.”²⁸⁰**
- 8) **“Transcend – [become] involved in the moment.”²⁸¹**
- 9) **“Be open to unusual [or unexpected] moments...blessed.”²⁸²**
- 10) **“You must always leave room for things you cannot control to happen. You must leave room in your mind and heart that these things do not ruin a performance...what you do to react to them is what ruins a performance.”²⁸³**

²⁷³ Greg Milliren, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

²⁷⁴ Jean Ferrandis, Telephone Interview.

²⁷⁵ Jennifer Grim, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

²⁷⁶ Catherine Ramirez (document author), Questionnaire.

²⁷⁷ David Shostac, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

²⁷⁸ Marie-Hélène Breault, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

²⁷⁹ Wissam Boustany, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

²⁸⁰ Conor Nelson, Emailed Questionnaire Response.

²⁸¹ Carol Wincenc, Telephone Interview.

²⁸² Viviana Guzman, Telephone Interview.

²⁸³ Mary Stolper, Emailed Questionnaire Response.